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NOTHING COULD ILLUSTRATE more clearly the confusion in Senator Borah's mind than his astounding statement *after* the passage of the Kellogg Pact that if England does not come to terms with us on the question of the freedom of the seas we shall build a navy greater than Great Britain's. Next to his assertion that the Kellogg Pact would not have prevented the war between Spain and the United States in 1898, this is the severest blow that anybody has struck at the pact and at Borah's own reputation for high intelligence and ability. Why, if the Kellogg Pact means anything, must we build a larger navy than England's on any excuse? Why does it not point the way to abolishing both the navies? Again, if the Kellogg Pact is anything else than meaningless, there will be only defensive wars, with the aggressors outlawed by all nations. Where then will be the neutrals? And what other nations would wish to supply the sinews of war to the outlaw? It is only necessary to state these questions to show that Senator Borah and Senator Walsh of Montana, who in large degree sides with the former, do not take the Kellogg Pact at all seriously although they voted and worked for it. As it is, the outlook for the passage of the fifteen-cruiser bill has improved, especially as Mr. Hoover has announced that while he is not, as Congressman Britten asserted, for the biggest navy in the world, he stands exactly where Mr. Coolidge stands on the issue. Unfortunately, the silly idea that we can bluff or overawe England with fifteen cruisers has taken hold of many minds.

THE TARIFF SWINERY daily displayed in the hearings before the Ways and Means Committee of the House of Representatives exceeds anything in our recollection. Here are some of the choice bits from the dispatches: A 100 per cent increase in the tariffs on live-stock, dairy, and meat products is demanded by farmer representatives from Colorado and Minnesota, who thus display not the slightest hesitancy in raising the cost of living to all their fellow-Americans. As for the American hen, it is in the greatest danger from the invasion of Argentine turkeys, horrible Communist poultry from Russia, and nationalist eggs from China. The Gloucester fishermen can no longer hold out, with all their skill and daring, unless the duty on haddock be increased from one to three cents a pound and two and one-half cents on codfish in the raw. The Farmers' National Grain Dealers' Association wants the tariff on corn raised from fifteen to thirty cents a bushel. Florida demands increases on fresh fruits and vegetables of from 2 to 500 per cent of the existing tariffs. As for tobacco, New England and Florida producers of five-cent cigars demand an increase of from $2.10 to $4.62 a pound, while the manufacturers of fillers, oddly enough, demand a reduction of the existing duty to a mere $1.85 a pound—too much protection for this group! Next we have the artists who are anxious to shut out all European paintings, sculpture, etc., thus placing art on the same basis as corn-growing and filling five-cent cigars. Finally, one J. H. Malone of Florida put it in a nut-shell when he declared that all tariffs should be high enough to "keep out everything that can be produced in this country."

THE IMPUDENCE OF ROBERT W. STEWART in fighting for reelection as chairman of the board of directors of the Standard Oil Company of Indiana, despite the fact that John D. Rockefeller, Jr., largest minority stockholder, has asked him to resign, was answered by Senator Gerald P. Nye in a speech which warms the cockles of our heart. Stewart, in an official statement to the press said that he had never had any connection with the Continental Trading Company (one of the shadiest and still mysterious links in the drama of Teapot Dome); that he personally had never made a dollar out of the transaction but that the Standard Oil of Indiana had made several millions. "These millions," he went on, "were partly the source from which the steady stream of past dividends has been paid to the stockholders of the Indiana company every quarter during recent years." Senator Nye was aroused by this statement from Stewart, who, he said, "defied the Senate, misled the Senate, lied to the Senate, and then proceeded to explain successfully, his record to the satisfaction of District of Colum-

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bia jurors, an accomplishment, be it noted, not monopolized by Stewart alone." Senator Nye went on: "Apparently his receiving $750,000 in Liberty bonds from the pool of profits of this company (Continental Trading Company) is not, in his mind, to be considered a 'connection'." He had a word also for the stockholders. "How they must prize the shares which bring them profits through such secret, obnoxious deals as was that one involving the Continental Trading Company." At this writing Mr. Rockefeller appears to have a voting control, and is entitled to all credit for forcing the fight against Stewart.

A MONROE DOCTRINE FOR SHIPPING seems to be the idea of some of our chauvinist politicians and business men. Nothing less than such a policy could have animated the United States Shipping Board when it got so hot under the collar at the entrance of the Cunard Line into the New York-Havana service that it put the steamship President Roosevelt on the route as a competitor at cut rates. And now Representative White of Maine, chairman of the merchant marine committee of the House and joint sponsor with Senator Jones of the recently enacted Jones-White shipping act, would carry the idea of a Monroe Doctrine for our sea commerce still farther. He suggests that when foreign shipping lines use our ports as a base for engaging in a trade "in the development of which their native countries have had no share" we should penalize them with some kind of an excise, tonnage, or income tax. He also urges that the President issue a proclamation bringing the Philippine Islands within the provisions of the coastwise-shipping law, thus limiting commerce between them and the United States to American vessels. Finally, he would oust foreign shipping companies from choice piers on Manhattan Island by taking away their leases, if necessary, by condemnation proceedings. *The Nation* believes in an American merchant marine, but not in one built up either through coddling on the one hand or bullying on the other. Foreign shipping companies have done and are doing a vast service to this country, and it is ridiculous to talk about them as if they were trespassers and enemies. When they bid for Manhattan piers, no Americans wanted the properties; they have furnished transportation to and from the Philippines when otherwise facilities would have been lacking; and a British company is even now supplying the only direct service between the United States and the Virgin Islands—at the request of the islanders—because no American company wants the business.

THE DEATH OF OSCAR W. UNDERWOOD removed one whose name was made known by the radio to almost every family in America during the Democratic Convention in Madison Square Garden in 1924. "Alabama gives 28 votes for Underwood" was droned out at the head of every poll. But Mr. Underwood merited distinction for far better reasons. A man of ability, of charm, of personality, and of vigorous adherence to his beliefs, he was personally one of the best of the Southern representatives of recent decades in the Congress, in which he served sixteen years in the House and twelve in the Senate. In both bodies he was for a time the Democratic leader, and he gave his name to the tariff bill which was one of the first achievements of the Wilson Administration, though also a genuine disappointment in that it was such a mass of compromises. Mr. Underwood was also one of the American representatives at the Washington Conference on the limitation of armaments and a member of the International Peace Commission between France and the United States which met in September, 1927. Mr. Underwood's character was of the highest and his devotion to the old-fashioned Democratic principles sincere and uncompromising, but his general outlook was none the less extremely conservative on all economic and political questions. It was this conservatism which made him impossible as a compromise candidate in 1924, when the Democratic Presidential nomination went to John W. Davis instead of to him.

CHARLES E. HUGHES has spoken out well to the members of the Bronx Bar Association upon the need of reform and redress within the ranks of the bar, demanding that the profession set its own house in order. He took pride in the recent mobilization of the organized forces of the bar in New York City to end the evil of "ambulance chasing" and cited it as marking a new era in the profession. We hope so, for the courts as well as the lawyers themselves are deeply discredited with the general public. Yet the road to reform is plain if the lawyers will but follow Mr. Hughes's advice and set themselves to the task the country over. In New York City, for instance, there is the grave evil of the pollution of the minor courts in which the poorest of the people are sent for what passes for justice. It is in New York, too, that the law's delays are at their worst and that the third degree flourishes unchecked. We could not help wondering, as we read Mr. Hughes's excellent appeal, whether he would not mobilize the organized forces of the bar against the city's new Police Commissioner, Grover Whalen, who not only boasts that he encourages the third degree, as by placing suspects, undressed, in icy rooms, but declares that suspects with bad records have no constitutional rights. Finally Mr. Whalen asserts that his men are entitled to go into speakeasies without warrants and smash everything to pieces—and they are doing it daily. If this flouting of the law and the Constitution does not call for reproof from Charles E. Hughes, as head of the New York Bar Association, what could? Reform begins at home in the law as well as in other walks of life.

MAJOR-GENERAL AMOS A. FRIES, head of the Chemical Warfare Division of our army, boasted before the House Appropriations Committee recently that the United States leads in deadly gases. Our favorite, he said, was mustard gas which disables but does not necessarily kill. Our government, he declared, has developed the most effective gas mask in the world. Large supplies of these masks are stored in various parts of the United States and its dependencies where they will be available if needed. He encourages city dwellers by telling them that the danger from gas attacks is not so great as imagined. It is comforting to know that it would be far easier to protect a city population against a gas-bomb attack than, for instance, against high explosives hurled from airplanes. Finally, he gives explicit instructions for defense from gas attacks: Go into an upstairs room, plug the keyhole, and seal the chinks at doors and windows with strips of paper. You will be

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safe—at least until the oxygen in the room is exhausted—unless somebody starts hurling high explosives from airplanes. At first we felt that a campaign should be started to put gas masks in every American home by Easter. We still feel that it would be a good idea. They would serve as a perpetual warning of the war-struck state of military brains—and they would be helpful the next time a general or an admiral begins to talk.

IT TAKES MORE THAN PAPER and ink to make a magazine. It takes intelligence and planning and a deal of careful, hard work. All of these seem to have gone into the *Survey Graphic* for February, which is a presentation in word and picture of the "New Germany" that has struggled to its feet since defeat laid it prostrate in 1918. The issue commemorates the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Carl Schurz and was arranged by John Palmer Gavit, formerly managing editor of the New York *Evening Post,* who spent several months in Germany getting material. The new German republic is plumbed in a variety of aspects—political, economic, literary, artistic, and educational. There are contributions from Chancellor Müller and Foreign Minister Stresemann; there is an article on reparations and finance by Dr. M. J. Bonn; Dr. Alfred Kuhn, Lillian T. Mowrer, Baron von Olsen, and others discuss progress in the arts. But this is only a hint of the total contents, which are made more understandable and beautiful by numerous drawings, charts, photographs, and posters.

WADDOING TO A MAN 13,000 miles away to get him to radio 13,000 miles back to a man at close hand in order to get the latter to hang up his telephone-receiver—this is the extraordinary happening reported by Commander Byrd in a recent dispatch to the New York *Times.* The *Times,* it appears, found difficulty in receiving the wireless messages from Byrd which are sent by him every night from his position in the Antarctic ice, because of the peculiar conditions around its building in New York City. The employee receiving these messages found that he could get them quite clearly in his home in Astoria across the East River from Manhattan, so clearly that by placing his telephone-receiver close to his radio receiving instrument the Byrd dots and dashes could be heard perfectly in the *Times's* office. One night, however, the *Times* wished to call its employee in Astoria. There was only one way to do it. The newspaper radioed to that one of Byrd's ships which was receiving, and asked it to telephone over the ice to the other ship to tell the employee in Astoria to hang up his receiver. Two minutes later the man in question rang up saying: "Byrd says you want to talk to me"! Thus is space annihilated. Who could have conceived a few years ago that one might send radio messages 26,000 miles in two minutes to ask a man only about three miles away to hang up his telephone-receiver?

BEAUTIFUL AND BRIGHT recruits for the navy now must be. From the naval recruiting headquarters at Norfolk, Virginia, comes the announcement that more than 150 men have been rejected during the last two months because they were "too homely to wear the uniform"! And in addition, acccording to Chief Yoeman H. H. Krataniz, in charge of recruiting, successful tars must be intelligent, they must be "clean of body and mind, and they must come to us with good characters." "We are demanding a little more than is required of moving-picture beauties," Mr. Krataniz went on to explain. *The Nation* editors are not quite prepared to indorse the new requirement. Sailors are altogether too popular as it is with the female sex; if, as it is reported, a sailor now has a wife in every port, what sort of domestic establishment will be conducted by a beautiful, intelligent, clean sailor—*with a good character?* Susceptible ladies will flock to these young Galahads; will the Galahads be equal to resisting their charms? Let us be realistic about these matters. Would it not be wiser, in the interests of character, to insist that recruits be either ugly and clever or dull and fair? That would not put such a strain on the weaker sex—and it might even make life easier for the recruiting officers.

WE ARE HAPPY TO ANNOUNCE that Professor Charles A. Beard, Mr. Willmott H. Lewis, Washington correspondent of the London *Times,* and Mr. Norman Thomas have consented to act, with the editors of *The Nation,* as judges in the prize contest announced in the last two issues of *The Nation.* Through the generosity of a reader we are enabled to offer a prize of $150 for the best essay on "What Is Making for War with England?" The essays are not only to set forth the causes making for friction, but must include fundamentally constructive suggestions for relieving the steadily growing tension between the United States and Great Britain. The essays must not exceed 3,600 words, and the editor reserves the right to print the winning essay and any others that seem desirable. The competition closes on April 1; no manuscripts will be considered after that day. They must be addressed to the Prize Essay Editor, *The Nation,* 20 Vesey Street, New York City. Postage must be inclosed if their return is desired.

AN ABLE, OUTSTANDING, liberally minded university president was Clarence C. Little of the University of Michigan, whose resignation has just been accepted by its regents. For four years he tried to work with the machine which has made of Michigan one of the most rigid of our great State educational institutions. He failed, and no more discouraging news has come out of the college world for some time past. The lesson of it is that here is another place where a man of charm, distinction, intellectual courage, and advanced thought in the field of teaching is not wanted. It is said that he went too fast; that he was too far ahead of his time; that he wanted to introduce Eastern college methods into the Western college world; that he was too outspoken. The truth is that he believed in birth control and said so, with the result that the Catholics in the State rose in arms against him. He did not believe in the narrow nationalism of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and he said so, and there were the inevitable vindictive replies. He thought that respect for the law should be upheld on the campus, and therefore he invited in the prohibition officers to discover violations of the Volstead law, if they could, and that made the students angry. He opened the university to all kinds of opinions, and that was resented. In other words, he was a reformer with the courage of his convictions, and he paid the price in this reactionary age.

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Parties, Politics, and Progress

THE latest public man to retire voluntarily out of disgust with the political system is Congressman Meyer Jacobstein of Rochester, New York, who has served three terms in Congress with usefulness to his constituency and distinction for himself. Now, like Speaker Reed a quarter of a century ago, he goes back to civil life disillusioned if not cynical, with the belief that nothing worth while can be achieved under present conditions. Speaking at a dinner of the New York Society of the Genesee on January 21, he advocated the abolition of the party system of government and the establishment of a business corporation to handle national affairs. He urged a "United States of America Corporation" in which each voter might hold stock. In his judgment the party system will have been scrapped within twenty-five years. Finally he dwelt upon the fact that "neither major party offers clearly defined opposition on any public question."

This utterance is the more striking because it comes just at the moment when Al Smith and Governor Roosevelt are urging the rehabilitation of the Democratic Party. Beginning with New York State, Governor Roosevelt seeks to rebuild it by vigorous leadership throughout the year from an efficient headquarters, by putting true and trustworthy Democrats in charge of the local machinery where the party's influence is at lowest ebb and by constant publicity. Al Smith is for fighting on in the hopeless task of making an efficient party of protest and opposition out of a Democracy constituted of three entirely dissimilar and discordant elements, and then making it control the administration of the country. Undoubtedly the creation of a genuine party of protest would be a great service to the Republic. Never has there been greater need of a united and powerful opposition, such as exists in the British Parliament, to those who have now been intrenched in power for twelve years and up to this time have governed the country chiefly for the rich and privileged and disgraced it by their corruption.

But what both Mr. Smith and Governor Roosevelt overlook is the fact that no party can be a vital one without principles; no opposition is worth while which differs merely in slight percentages from the party in power. As the editors of *The Nation* have long been pointing out, the Democrats have jettisoned their chief party principles. Some are avowed protectionists, others big-navy men, others thoroughgoing imperialists, and still others as ardent defenders of the economic status as any Republicans. On prohibition both parties are cowardly. When Mr. Smith appeals for Democratic vigilance on the tariff, he forgets that his party in the last campaign finally cut loose from the tariff doctrines of Grover Cleveland and stultified itself by accepting the principle of protection and abandoning the old slogan of "a tariff for revenue only." No party, we repeat, is worth resurrecting which is without some definite and fixed beliefs peculiar to itself. While we are not yet ready to accept Mr. Jacobstein's picture of a national holding company and the elimination of all parties in the country, we are quite of his opinion that something radical must happen if progress is to come out of the present situation.

But if Congressman Jacobstein is ahead of time in the national field, who can deny that it is time to abandon the party system in the States? We have not the slightest interest in Governor Roosevelt's effort to build up the Democracy as a State organization. New York, like many other States, has been robbed and retarded because of a party conflict which is utterly without excuse for existence. No one has pointed this out more ably than Governor Smith, whose whole fight at Albany for years was due to his endeavor to conduct the business of the State as a business, to see its government progress as a great and human administrative organization, only to find himself constantly blocked by the Republicans. They knew that he was right, and were usually whipped into line, but maneuvered against him simply for petty party advantage. Indiana is another State especially cursed by the two-party system. In cities like Rochester and Cleveland all party designations have been ended, with much resultant benefit even though the present condition of city affairs there may not meet with the entire approval of the citizenry. The point is that there and elsewhere the folly of choosing a man to govern a city because in national affairs he is a Democrat or a Republican has at last been recognized. It is ridiculous that any American State government should be Democratic or Republican. Progress in the States will best come when the two-party system is smashed except for voicing national policies.

Here we find ourselves in completest accord with the finest figure in the politics of Washington. Senator Norris, as we have already reported, wishes to end his political career as Governor of Nebraska in order to make over the government of that State and banish partisan politics from it. He would do away with the bi-cameral State legislature which has long since outlived its usefulness and would substitute therefor a single legislative chamber of not more than twenty-five members elected on an absolutely nonpartisan basis. In addition to removing all party designations from the ballot, he would eliminate a large proportion of the existing office-holders and create a unified and efficient administrative machine. Such an experiment would be of the greatest importance to the whole country; it is a move toward reorganization which should appeal particularly to Herbert Hoover if he is the kind of administrator most people think him. It is probably a new idea for Governor Roosevelt. But we have no hesitation in saying that he would render his State and his country a far greater service, and make his name known from one end of the nation to the other, if he would adopt Senator Norris's proposal instead of trying to revivify a party along State lines when those ought to be abolished once for all.

This in no wise militates against a new party in the nation. The response to our editorial appeal of December 26 last for a new liberal party has been so encouraging that we are more than ever of the opinion that the millions who are disgusted with both of the old parties would welcome an opportunity to vote for principles—and the elimination of party politics in cities and States. Here is a sound plank for a new organization of progress.

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Wanted—A Consumers' Advocate

IT is gratifying to note the growing recognition of the breakdown of public-service commissions as regulating agencies for the power industry. Recently the New York *World* published a remarkable editorial analysis of the failure of the New York Public Service Commission in regulating transit, power, and telephone corporations in its jurisdiction, and doubtless similar indictments could be drawn against almost every public-service commission in the United States except those of Massachusetts, Wisconsin, and Maryland. The *World* proposes an impartial committee to investigate the whole procedure of utility control and to propose new methods. It mentions Charles E. Hughes and Alfred E. Smith as two logical selections for the committee. There is no doubt that such a committee is badly needed, although we question the selection of Charles E. Hughes after his recent appearance before the United States Supreme Court as a representative of the Interborough Rapid Transit Company. But is it not possible to improve on our system of regulation without waiting for a lengthy investigation?

The most obvious shortcoming in the present regulative system is the absence of aggressive agencies of investigation and prosecution. The power industry is at least five times as large today as it was in 1913 and still the feeble State public-service commissions, overloaded with detail and undersupplied with appropriations, are pretending to examine and regulate the gigantic financial mergers which fasten upon the consumers and posterity many millions in fake valuation. One by one the power interests buy out the best of our public-service commissioners at salaries three or four times what the State is willing to pay and leave behind some worried incompetents whose eyes are fixed greedily upon future vacancies in the power trust and who could not, even if they were perfectly disinterested, cope with the enormous mass of detail which new developments involve.

Pending the development of a strong movement for public ownership we believe that the first and most logical step toward utility regulation would be the creation of an office of public advocate for consumers similar to the office of People's Counsel in Maryland. The State public-service commissions are often good judges of economic questions brought before them, but they have utterly failed as prosecutors. When a rate case comes before a public-service commission, the power companies have the most aggressive and able lawyers in the country. The theory of Anglo-Saxon law is that out of the clash of arguments and evidence truth will come, but in our public-service commissioners the big-power attorneys are not met with aggressive consumers' advocates. They are met with the split personalities of public-service commissioners who pretend to act as lawyers for the public but who, when their prosecuting function is ended, drop their swords and shields, walk around their chairs, don their black robes, and become judges. The natural result of this practice has become evident in almost every commission in the country. The members have become referees, not advocates. The gigantic new abuses in the power industry which cry out for thorough exposure and vigorous prosecution have been handled passively—and usually when it is too late to correct them.

The only automatic policeman who can protect consumers against the manipulations of new holding companies and watered stock is the policy that all rates shall be based on actual investment. Under that policy any excessive profit coming to the power companies is instantly revealed in the price of stock. But, unfortunately, only one public-service commission in the United States, that of Massachusetts, has vigorously applied this policy. Outside of Massachusetts consumers are almost everywhere being forced to pay tribute to the promoters of great electric combines for excessive recapitalization, for extortionate contracts made with subsidiary supply companies controlled by the inner circle of power officials, and for the high-priced attorneys who fight for the owners against the very consumers who pay the bill. One vigorous public advocate in every State who represented the consumers as the prosecuting arm of the public-service commission would be worth a thousand times his salary in checking up new developments. Moreover the presence of such public prosecutors in the field would allow the overworked public-service commissions to resume their proper functions as judicial bodies examining evidence impartially. The experience of Maryland with a consumers' advocate of this type has demonstrated the immense practical value of such an officer.

Mr. Gilbert's Report

THE fourth annual report of the Agent-General for Reparations, S. Parker Gilbert, which has now come to hand in full, reveals both the smooth working of the Dawes Plan and the inability of Germany to pay as yet any considerable amount on reparation account out of her own resources. In his detailed review, replete with statistics covering almost every phase of business activity, Mr. Gilbert recites that Germany has made as heretofore all required reparation payments loyally and punctually, of which a constantly increasing percentage is being remitted in foreign currencies without disturbance to German exchange. The previous annuities have been met without affecting the standard of living of the great mass of the German people and, as we have already recorded, he foresees no difficulty in raising from now on the standard annuity of $2,500,000,000 of gold marks.

On the other hand Germany has not achieved a surplus of exports which the experts who devised the Dawes Plan declared to be essential to the financing of reparation payments. Before the World War German imports exceeded German exports, and the same situation exists today. After allowing for corrections, Mr. Gilbert finds that Germany's excess of merchandise imports over exports was over eight billions of marks in the first four annuity years. He deems encouraging the fact that, owing largely to a recession in trade, Germany's imports and exports approached an equilibrium last fall, but he makes no prediction of exports exceeding imports by any large sum in the near future.

Yet, while this heavy adverse balance of trade was piling up, Germany paid with great ease approximately five and one-half billions of marks for reparation purposes. This was

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done, however, by borrowing abroad more than was needed to meet any payments to reparation creditors. During the four annuity years long-time loans placed in foreign countries for German account approximated six billions of marks, while Mr. Gilbert concedes that the volume of short-time debt owed abroad is very large and difficult of estimation.

In addition, Germany has been borrowing large sums abroad for the purpose of modernizing her industrial plants with a view to reducing production costs and expanding her export trade. As taxes are estimated to be absorbing one-quarter of the total national income, the domestic market has been unable to supply in full the capital needed for this rationalization of German industry. Domestic issues of new securities yield such high returns—over 8 per cent in the case of the mortgage bonds issued by real-estate credit associations—that many foreigners have purchased them. While of an indeterminative amount, such purchases, Mr. Gilbert points out, together with long and short-time loans placed abroad, have been an important item in figuring the balance of international trade. It is again clear, therefore, that Germany's reparation indebtedness is not being defrayed out of an economic overplus, but from the proceeds of foreign loans. If reparation payments are to continue on the prescribed scale these foreign loans—which in the words of the Dawes experts disguise and postpone, but do not alter the real situation—will be necessary until such time as Germany produces a surplus available for export above what she consumes. And until this point is reached she cannot dispense with the transfer protection clause of the Dawes Plan without endangering the stability of her currency.

Throughout his report Mr. Gilbert contrasts Germany's present economic situation with conditions in 1923 when affairs were at their worst on account of the French invasion of the Ruhr and the wiping out of the people's accumulated savings through the inflation of the mark. Measured by this method of comparison Germany's recent industrial progress has been undeniably great. But it should be remembered that other countries involved in the World War have also been recuperating rapidly. Of all the leading belligerents Germany has made the least advance relatively since 1913, as shown in the last issue of the economic review of the Reichs-Kredit-Gesellschaft.

But on careful reading the Gilbert report will be found to give a none too favorable picture of Germany's industrial outlook—despite German protests that it is too optimistic. Instead of escaping from, the country seems to be sinking deeper into its financial morass. In the opinion of some authorities new capital is being formed at a rate only half that of pre-war days. German agriculture, Mr. Gilbert reports, is in a precarious state with many agrarian properties mortgaged for more than they are worth. With the decline of German trade last year came an increase in unemployment. As Germany will always depend on foreign countries for essential raw materials and foodstuffs, the attainment of a favorable balance of trade is not an easy task. Her financial burdens are tremendously heavy; there is still much suffering in the middle-class and among great groups of workers. The new committee of experts must bear these facts in mind, as well as Mr. Gilbert's correct view of Germany's ability to pay the standard annuity, in deciding whether that burden shall continue to be placed upon her and, if so, for how long.

Speculation in Books

THE library of Jerome Kern, composer and popular song writer, has just been sold for $1,792,462. Fourteen hundred and eighty-two books, manuscripts, and other items comprised the collection; any professional man might have five times that many books—worth about $5,000. And as one notes the astonishing sum paid for Mr. Kern's library, one wonders just wherein lies the difference.

For example, the prize in the Kern collection was Shelley's own copy of "Queen Mab," with manuscript revisions, sold to Gabriel Wells for $68,000—$1,000 more than Dr. Rosenbach of Philadelphia was willing to pay for it. Any poet, any professor, any critic might have in his library the Cambridge edition of the works of Shelley, containing "Queen Mab" in full, and purchased for $2. The manuscript revisions are not there, to be sure, although the poem as published incorporates them. But are these revisions, the annotations of Shelley's changes of mind, together with the ephemeral touch of Shelley's fingers, worth the large sum—even in a millionaire age—of $68,998? One is respectfully inclined to doubt it.

Bibliophiles will shout angrily that books are worth what you want to pay for them; that if a first edition is not worth thousands of dollars, neither is a diamond necklace, a race horse, or a violin. It all depends on who wants the item, how much money he can spend, and how anxious he is to spend it. This is certainly true. Moreover there have always been collectors of rarities. In any age, men of wealth have been willing to pay for uniqueness. When it no longer is distinctive to possess all you want of anything, you automatically find distinction in buying, at whatever price, the single object of its kind in existence. Thus rare books will always have their value; and books that actually passed through the hands of great men and women now dead will always be rarer than any others.

It is plain, however, that the high finance of book-collecting and book-selling has passed out of this comparatively simple stage. The villain of the piece is often said to be Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach of Philadelphia. He, it is alleged, has taken the book business out of the hands of innocent persons who loved books, inside as well as out, and put it in the category of big business. The mere presence of Dr. Rosenbach at a sale, one hears, automatically drives up the prices 50 per cent. He is a financier. Thus we need not be surprised at the spectacle of a young man like Mr. Jerome Kern, who made his first sucesses in Tin Pan Alley not much more than two decades ago, selling out a small but extraordinarily select library for nearly two million dollars. Mr. Kern, aided by a keen business sense, sound advice, and considerable capital, was engaged in a lucrative undertaking. That the undertaking concerned books is completely irrelevant. He is reported to be at present interested in boats. Meanwhile it does no harm to the book business to read that a first edition of Poe's "Murders in the Rue Morgue" was lately found in a pile of seemingly worthless old books and sold to a collector for $25,000. Romance, big profits, above all the notion that anybody may get rich quick—all these help trade—in boots and shoes or real estate or books.

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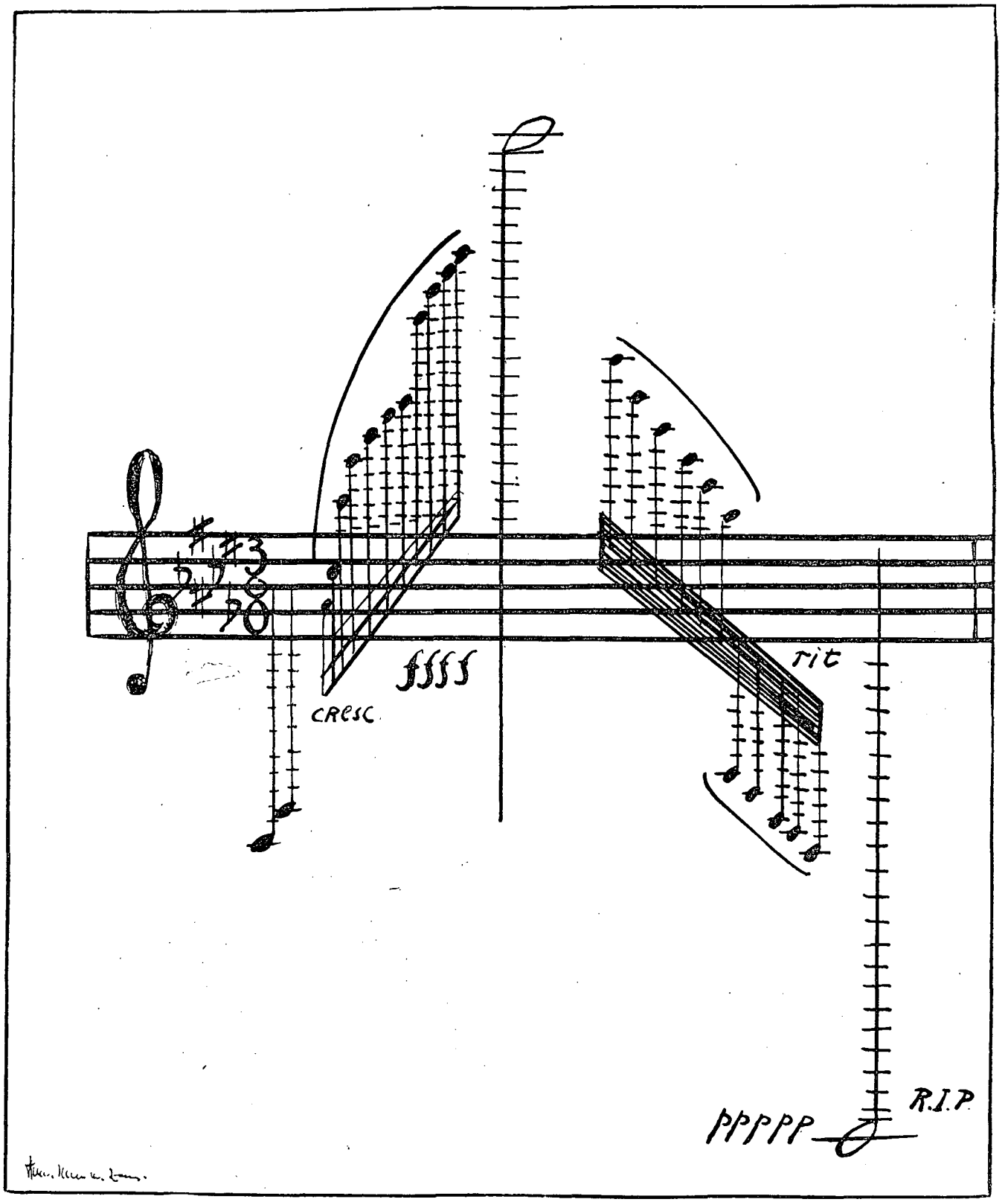

Modern Fame

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Sex and Our Children

By DUDLEY NICHOLS

INSTEAD of dipping into the past to recreate famed ancient scenes, such as the ecclesiastical trials of Giordano Bruno in the sixteenth century or Galileo Galilei in the seventeenth, a modern painter with his eyes open might have wandered into the Brooklyn federal courtroom on January 28 and have found their twentieth-century counterpart in the trial of Mary Ware Dennett for sexual heresy.

The setting was no less grim and foreboding. Beside Federal Judge Grover M. Moscowitz on the bench sat Monsignor John Belford of the Church of the Nativity. In a jury seat to their right John S. Sumner of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice was hunched against the wall, his overcoat still on, peering through dark-rimmed spectacles at an elderly white haired woman in a blue dress sitting at the defendant's table. Opposite Mr. Sumner sat the Reverend Dr. Elliott White of Grace Church, a curious baffled expression on his scholarly countenance as he listened to the United States of America, in the person of Assistant United States Attorney James E. Wilkinson, state its case against Mrs. Dennett, indicted under Section 334 of the United States Code for having distributed through the mails her pamphlet, "The Sex Side of Life, An Explanation for Young People." The spectators' benches were filled with doctors, lawyers, clergymen, educators, and a multitude of representatives of the fourth estate.

And concentric within this ring of crowding faces stood the adversaries, duelling with light and darkness, embodying and dramatizing the antagonized forces at work in the roomful of people. Morris L. Ernst, young, vital, clear reasoning, asked dismissal of the indictment. He had a daughter of eleven. He did not fear for her to have the information of the pamphlet. The danger, he maintained, was not in precocious stimulation but in delayed information. More than 400 clergymen, doctors, educators, and social workers had upheld the propriety and need of such disseminated information.

"These people," he said, "of recognized moral probity and importance, have been the most enthusiastic distributors of the pamphlet. To brand the pamphlet as obscene is to condemn them as disseminators of obscenity."

More than 25,000 pamphlets had been distributed over a period of years. He quoted Felix Grendon of the faculty of the College of the City of New York:

"It is splendid. I wish five million copies of the article could be distributed so that no adolescent need be without one."

And Wilma K. McFarland, editor of the *Portal,* a Sunday-school publication of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was quoted as follows:

"The best and most wholesome treatment of the subject for young folks I have ever seen anywhere."

And again Goodwin F. Watson, instructor in religious education at Union Theological Seminary: "For two years classes in adolescence at Union Theological Seminary have found it the most valuable book available to place in the hands of young people. It is truthful, wholesome, and combines frankness and idealism in the most refreshing fashion. In a number of conferences with professional boys' workers, especially in the Y. M. C. A., the book has been studied, and indorsed by the men as of more use than any other publication."

Mr. Ernst had his portfolio full of approbations from Y. M. C. A.'s and Y. W. C. A.'s, from churches, colleges, and schools. He referred to pamphlets on sex education issued by the American Social Hygiene Society, the United States Public Health Service, and the New York State Health Department. If Mrs. Dennett were to be held guilty of transmitting obscene matter through the mails, then these bureaus and organizations were likewise guilty. There were three essential points in Mrs. Dennett's pamphlet which especially agitated the prosecuting authorities. First it gave the facts about the probable eventually complete control of venereal diseases. Second it gave the undisputed facts about self-abuse: that the greatest harm ensues from excess and the consequent tormenting sense of guilt. Third it gave the facts about the feeling of joy and well-being which accompanies a healthy and fulfilled emotional life.

"Suppose the pamphlet does fall into the hands of a child under ten years old," said Mr. Ernst. "What injury can ensue? Can it have any emotional significance? Certainly it will serve to satisfy an intellectual curiosity and I do not see why that curiosity should not be satisfied. This pamphlet gives the facts about life. There are no innuendoes or half-truths. Things are called by their proper scientific names instead of by meaningless euphemisms, and the whole tone is forthright and healthy.

"If you deny this distribution then you are sending children back to the gutter for their information. They must whisper with other ignorant, curious children like themselves. Misinformation must seep down to them from unhealthy older minds. What other source of information have children got? Suppose an intelligent and conscientious parent does send a child to the doctor to be informed, as many do. Then always afterwards that child will inevitably associate in his mind measles, mumps, doctors—and sex. It becomes in all its aspects something akin to a disease, and as such fearsome and unpleasant.

"I say no one is too young to receive the true facts in a healthy way, when you consider other possible sources of information. And suppose—though I do not concede this—that a few children did suffer: what about the rights of adults? What about the rights of children of the next generation? Darkness and the deterrents of fear must go. They are an inheritance of our darker past."

In closing his argument Mr. Ernst leveled an accusation that must have made the musty walls of the federal courtroom quiver with indignation.

"This pamphlet is not obscene," he said. "Its motive is clean and healthy. It is pure, if you use the word in that way. Obscenity is a subjective thing. It exists in the minds of dirty vice-hunters who are always looking for dirt. They

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can always find dirt because it is a subjective thing. And I say not Mrs. Dennett but the grand jurors were obscene when they stated that the pamphlet was too obscene to be spread upon the record in the indictment which they found against her."

The atmosphere of intellectual and dispassionate statement which Mr. Ernst had generated by his argument was rapidly dispelled when the Assistant United States Attorney, Mr. Wilkinson, charged into the ring, lowering the horns of a dilemma. The full flavor of Mr. Wilkinson, elderly, affable, and voluminous, a sort of uneducated Gilbert K. Chesterton, can only be projected by the partial reproduction of his flaming harangue: Liberty, but not license, was his dilemma.

Mr. Wilkinson warmed up slowly: "Liberty, not license" and "the care of the tender young under the wing." He slapped the pamphlet with anger:

"Not one word in this about chastity! Not one word about self-control! Not one word to distinguish simple lust from lawful passion! It describes the act as being accompanied by the greatest pleasure and enjoyment. Why, there's nothing a boy could see, on reading this book, except a darkened room and a woman!"

Mr. Wilkinson had very little about him to suggest the poet, yet he decried the want of poetry in the pamphlet before him.

"There's nothing here about the mighty stars and spaces," he cried; "nothing about the flowers, the Savior, about music, poetry, and literature. Why, sir, I am the father of four daughters. But I'd never think of allowing even my twenty-two-year-old daughter who is a schoolteacher to lay hand on such filth as this!

"Would you trust a sixteen-year-old boy and girl in a room alone at night reading this book?"

The prosecutor branched off on the topic of modern literature and its license in regard to emotional life, and he quoted an authority to the effect that all this literature was nothing more than "collective exhibitionism."

"The sober duty devolves upon this court," he continued vehemently, "of protecting the young from this idea of sex which pervades the world today. There is no mention of chastity in this vile pamphlet. Chastity! Let us remember that Roman senator who, even in far-off pagan times, struck his daughter dead when he learned of her unchastity!

"And the author of this pamphlet even suggests that birth control will eventually be practiced. Birth control!—hitting at the very foundation of government! Remember, your honor, what Caesar said when he came home from the wars and saw a crowd of women among the cheering. 'Where are their children?' he demanded. 'Why have they not children instead of those pups they tend?' What will happen to America if our national standard falls so low, I ask? Where will our soldiers come from in our hour of need? God help America if we haven't men to defend her in that hour!"

The Reverend Dr. Elliott White of Grace Church regarded the inflamed prosecutor with an air of sad bewilderment. Canon Chase, also present, looked grim. Mr. Sumner was inscrutably severe.

"Think of the effect of this pamphlet on an ignorant child!" pursued Mr. Wilkinson, though not pursuing further to the point of inquiring how that child might possibly become less ignorant under his own standard of suppression. "Let me read you what the author finally says: 'When two people really love each other, they don't care who knows it. They are proud of their happiness.' . . ."

Mr. Wilkinson laid down the booklet and regarded the black-gowned judge solemnly:

"Where," he said, "does the institution of home and family come off if we let a gospel like that go out to the world? . . . And suppose it falls into the hands of an abnormally minded boy. Why, the first thing he will do will be perhaps to waylay a beautiful girl . . . and . . . *attack her!*"

The Assistant United States Attorney concluded his heated address by playing his own card against that of Mr. Ernst. The defendant's lawyer had called to court clergymen and doctors and teachers in support of the propriety of the pamphlet. Very well: Mr. Wilkinson had called representatives from lunatic asylums. They would apprise the court of the horrors of extremity in self-abuse. . . . And on that high note of lunacy the hearing ended, Judge Moscowitz adjourning the case to February 18 before deciding whether the indictment shall go to a trial jury or be finally quashed.

To round out one's understanding of the case there only remains to quote this from the foreword of Dr. Victor Robinson, editor of the *Medical Review of Reviews,* just eleven years ago when Mrs. Dennett's article, composed as a result of her perfectly natural desire to enlighten her two pubescent sons, was chosen for publication in that periodical:

"Mary Ware Dennett's 'Sex Side of Life' is 'on the level.' In the pages of the *Medical Review of Reviews* her essay will reach only the profession, but we sincerely hope that this splendid contribution will be reprinted in pamphlet form and distributed by thousands to the general public. We are tolerably familiar with Anglo-American writings on sexology, but we know nothing that equals Mrs. Dennett's brochure. Physicians and social workers are frequently asked: 'What shall I say to my growing child?' Mary Ware Dennett, in her rational sex primer, at last furnishes a satisfactory answer."

And, as a sample of Mrs. Dennett's tone in her pamphlet, one concludes with this peroration from her "introduction for elders":

"We have contented ourselves by assuming that marriage makes sex relations possible. We have not yet said that it is only beautiful sex relations that can make marriage lovely. Young people need to have . . . some understanding of the marvelous place which sex emotion has in life. Only such an understanding can be counted on to give them the self-control that is born of knowledge, not fear, the reverence that will prevent premature or trivial connections, the good taste and finesse that will make their sex life when they reach maturity a vitalizing success."

It Seems to Heywood Broun

will appear in *The Nation* of February 20, on Mr. Broun's return from Florida.

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American Gallantry at Sea

By LINCOLN COLCORD

THE remarkable feat of the steamship America in picking up the sinking Italian steamer Florida, after receiving signals which placed her one hundred and fifty miles away from the place where she actually was, is something much more than a triumph of the radio compass. It enabled Captain George Fried to prove, as he did before, when the President Roosevelt under his command rescued the crew of the Antinoe, that there is nothing wrong with the spirit and fiber of the men who are manning our new merchant fleet. The names of the men who take their lives in their hands and enter the lifeboats are different from those that were written on the muster rolls of the beautiful old frigates of the War of 1812 and the Nantucket whalers, but the spirit of gallantry remains unchanged. Chief Officer Manning of the America is but the descendant of men who sailed around the world in cockle-shell Baltimore clippers, went into the harbor of Tripoli in the Intrepid and gave their lives, and of those who won for us in 1850 more than our share of the trade of the world because they carried sail longer than anybody else dared to risk it. Certainly every American can take pride in the stories of gallantry which keep coming from American-flag ships.

Take another case which has only recently occurred but which was not played up in the metropolitan press because the gallant men concerned landed at another port than New York. At Portland, Maine, on January 11, arrived the Saguache of the Scantic Line, bringing twenty-seven officers and seamen saved in mid-ocean from the sinking German steamer Roedelheim. The Saguache is only a humble freighter, yet the details of the rescue in which she participated are about as spectacular and heroic as those of the America and the Florida. Five hundred miles east of Cape Race, the Roedelheim sent out an S O S that she was sinking. Several ships answered; the giant liner Mauretania was in the vicinity but radioed that she would give up the task of rescue to the smaller vessels and sped on her way. The British freighter Meltonia and the American freighter Saguache started to the assistance of the sinking German vessel. Arriving at the position given by radio and finding no vessel there, the Meltonia gave up the search.

Again, as in the case of the America, the radio compass proved its worth. Captain Bendetti of the Saguache, a young man making his first trip as master, also arrived at the reported position of the Roedelheim to find no ship there; but by working with the radio compass steadily and carefully he at length came up to her just before dark. The scene was a stormy one, the sea rough, and a full gale blowing. The German ship was able to put overboard a small lifeboat, but on the second return trip to the Roedelheim it was smashed against the side with the loss of two men. Thereupon, it now being pitch dark, a lifeboat was launched by the Saguache, the entire American crew responding to the call for volunteers. It is interesting to run over the names of this boat's crew: Chief officer, Sederholt; boatswain, Mikkelssen; and seamen, Gunderssen, Bolin, Grahme, Tolsby, and Jonssen. And the young captain's name was Bendetti, just as there were a Foncke Killam and a Salvatore Bracco in the America's lifeboat. In storm and darkness the work of rescue was heroically accomplished by these brave men.

In the case of the heroic feat of the America, the points to be emphasized are obvious. Again a shipmaster showed expert navigating sense by striking unerringly for a disabled vessel, and this time over a greater distance and through the heart of a Western ocean gale. He allows for the drift, he follows faint radio signals, he makes no mistakes, and at the end of a run of many hundred miles he sights the object he is searching for dead ahead, at almost the hour at which he had promised to reach her. As for the seamanship and courage, the dash and confidence involved in the actual rescue of the Florida's crew, in the midst of storm and darkness, all this is common knowledge. Even in the Vestris disaster there was a case in point, although we paid scant attention to it at the time. The navigation of the American Shipper, the steamship that picked up many of the Vestris survivors, was a feat to be proud of. With a sixth sense of direction, allowing for the drift of the Gulf Stream and having only inadequate bearings at best, the master of this vessel brought himself to the scene of the disaster in the shortest possible time. These things happen only through expert seamanship, and once arrived at the scene, the officers and crew of the American Shipper conducted themselves with great gallantry and proved themselves fine seamen and thoughtful and kindly human beings. It is a fact, as *The Nation* has heard from passengers who were on the American Shipper, that even before the Vestris's S O S was heard on the air the officers and men of that little vessel had endeared themselves to the passengers who were profoundly impressed by the courtesy, the efficiency, and the generally fine character of the crew from captain down. From all that I hear the crews of American ships are courteous to passengers and considerate of their comfort, and keep their heads in emergencies.

Nor is this affected by the foreign names that many of these American seamen bear; on the contrary, it is quite possible that we have in these foreign names not only proof that the melting-pot is working well but a key to at least part of our shipping situation. The old homogeneous seafaring race of New England and the Atlantic seaboard is now a thing of the past, along with the sailing-ships it manned. Today for her new merchant marine America is drawing on the best stock of many maritime nations, stock that has been transplanted to her soil during the past few generations and has now become fully Americanized. This factor—the freshness and zest of the stock—rather than any marked difference in operating conditions, helps to maintain the high standard of personnel in the American merchant marine today. We should be blind if we trusted it to operate permanently. Many of the evils which lead to deterioration of seamanship are as prevalent in America as in Great Britain, and they are evils which could be corrected. We should bear in mind that if we are to develop a capable merchant marine, it cannot be done alone through

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mechanical perfection; it must be based soundly on seamanship and personnel, or it will not succeed. Men and officers must be adequately paid, well treated, and assured safety for their old age, as well as steady employment, if the right kind are to be drawn to the sea. The day of the "bucko" mate and of the shanghaing of drunken wrecks has gone forever. Captain Felix Riesenberg printed in the *Nautical Gazette* in December last a letter from a chief mate who bore this testimony to the men now on American ships:

> I would also like to make mention of the class of men who follow the sea nowadays. You know the general belief ashore is that a seafaring man is an uneducated, uncouth, unsocial, drinking roughneck, lacking culture and morality. I'd like to give you an idea of the men on this ship. One is a graduate from a Western college; two hold diplomas from Columbia University; several have diplomas from various correspondence schools in drafting, electricity, and other engineering fields, all beside their regular U. S. licenses. Their reading of literature is not, as you would think, detective or Wild West stories, but they like philosophy, psychology, and other sound reading, and subscribe for high-class magazines. You'd be surprised to hear our debates and discussions about politics, religion, art, music, etc. When ashore the men do not walk with a swagger, bowlegged, nor do they spit tobacco juice and say "Shiver my timbers!" or any of the picturesque rot that is associated with a class of hardy seamen long dead. I do not want you to get the impression that our men are softies. They can both curse and carry on. . . .

This is a gratifying word when we have heard so much about the industrialization of shipping, that steamship companies are only huge trusts and seamen only cogs in the wheel, and of the reduction of captains and officers to mere automata controlled by the wireless messages of the owners. There is a great deal of truth in all this. Industrialization has beyond dispute brought factors into the shipping world which have never been there before—factors which are bound to affect seamanship adversely unless corrected. The general destruction of the cooperative relationship between a man and his job, the destruction of the cooperative spirit, and of the personal initiative that goes with it—takes place just the same on board a huge ocean liner as in any large industrial unit ashore.

But new incidents are proving daily that men are still free to act on the sea if they choose to, and that, given the right men, standards of seamanship are as high as ever. Ask any shipping man of experience and unprejudiced views for a measure of excellence of personnel among the world's various merchant marines, and he will name the Norwegian, the Japanese, and the German, before the British, the French, and the Italian. The new American merchant marine stands easily in the first group. This statement is made not so much on a basis of national pride as on a recognition of plain facts. They show to our legitimate satisfaction that, whenever an opportunity arises, American seamanship still stands ready to seize it, and that the American genius is as clearly in evidence on the sea today, in its limited scope, as it was in the grand old days when our clipper ships brought home the prize of world commerce and oceanic supremacy. It is certainly cheerful news that the ancient traditions of the sea, as strong a heritage of honor as the human race possesses, do not seem to have decayed as industrialism strengthens its hold on our shipping.

Germany Galvanizes the League

By FELIX MORLEY

Geneva, December 31

ATTENTIVE observers at Geneva, if asked to specify the most significant development in the League of Nations during 1928, would probably agree in pointing to the leading role which Germany has come to play here in the year just closed. For the German emergence from the position of a conquered nation, admitted to the association of her conquerors on sufferance, is now complete. And with this emergence comes an alteration in the character of the League which loses none of its profound significance from the fact that it is developing slowly.

Long after they have been in subtle operation, trends and tendencies may be focused for the public eye by graphic incidents. Such was the case in the dramatic flare-up at the close of the recent Council session at Lugano. A stiffening in the German attitude regarding the protection of its former nationals now under Polish rule in Upper Silesia has lately been apparent to those who follow the subject closely. And in the two years since Germany became a member of the Council—a permanent member—that body has naturally been more scrupulous in its examination of petitions from the German minority organizations in Poland. It is equally natural that the Poles should resent the undoubted overriding of their national sovereignty which the League is entitled to exercise under the German-Polish Convention of 1922. When that convention was written the League was not taken very seriously, and it is a fair surmise that, when Poland signed, her Ministers did not anticipate that in a few years Geneva would be backing Berlin against Warsaw.

But Foreign Minister Zaleski of Poland now has good reason to realize that the present League is quite a different organization from that of 1922. Perhaps it was his customary triumphs over tiresome little Mr. Waldemaras, Premier of Lithuania, which prepared the pitfall into which Zaleski fell with a resounding crash. Perhaps it was merely the feeling that if France can treat the Germans of Alsace, and Italy those of the South Tyrol, contemptuously, Poland should have the same right in Upper Silesia. Whatever the cause of his *gaffe,* Zaleski is now secure in history as the man who first made the Council of the League take sides with Germany to put one of the war victors in the wrong.

This incident of December 15 has been told in the press, and as it is but a single illustration of our theme, needs no repetition here. It is only necessary to recall that the Polish Foreign Minister in a prepared speech denounced the activities of the Deutscher Volksbund—the German minorities organization in Polish Silesia—as threatening to become "utterly intolerable for Poland"; that Dr. Stresemann re-

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torted passionately, asking since when Poland had come to regard the normal fulfilment of a basic duty of the League "intolerable," and other pertinent questions so phrased as to put Zaleski completely in the wrong; and that Briand, after a confidential word with Chamberlain, hastily oiled the troubled waters and adjourned the fifty-third session of the Council with a promise which was at once assurance to Germany and rebuff to Poland. "The League considers the protection of minorities a most sacred task which it will never abandon," he said.

Thus, in public session at Lugano, was illustration given of the fact that the League can no longer fairly be regarded as an association of the victorious nations. Behind the scenes at this same session, where the German demand for evacuation of the Rhineland was the overshadowing issue, the evidence of growing German strength and power within the League was no less obvious.

Lugano, on the Swiss-Italian lake of that name, is only a few miles away from Locarno, at the head of Lake Maggiore. But expectations that the semi-mystical enthusiasms engendered by the Locarno Conference of 1925 would be reanimated at Lugano in 1928 were doomed to disappointment. The setting, where the old Alpine barrier begins to fall away to the fertile plains of Lombardy, was the same. So were the three chief actors: Briand, Chamberlain, Stresemann. Between the first two and the third, however, had developed a shadow the presence of which is utterly inimical to the "Locarno spirit." Three years after the signing of the Locarno treaties—a decade after the military occupation of the Rhineland—the Germans feel that their soil should be freed from the burden and shame of foreign troops. The resentment which Germans of every party feel over the failure of their concessions at Locarno to free the Rhineland has dried that tenuous "spirit" to evaporation point. And none feel this resentment more strongly, nor with more reason, than Dr. Stresemann, who fought so resolutely with domestic reaction to get the Locarno treaties through the Reichstag.

It followed, therefore, that sterility was the result of the sedulous efforts of the French and British Foreign Ministers, at the last Council meeting, to convince their German colleague that "there has been no retrocession from Locarno." Briand and Chamberlain, separately, or Briand and Chamberlain together, conferred privately with Stresemann every day of the Council sessions. To forward the tete-a-tetes between this Big Three, consideration of the formal program was virtually confined to the mornings, so that one almost wondered how unimportant Council members, like His Excellency the Persian delegate, managed to occupy their afternoons and evenings. But in spite of the time spent by the three Foreign Ministers in secret conclave, no definite progress was made toward evacuation of the Rhineland. And the reason for this was simply the refusal of the Germans to make any further compromises.

It is not merely the attrition of the "Locarno spirit" which is responsible for the pronounced stiffening in the German attitude on the Rhineland issue and all along the line. France could continue to focus her foreign policy on the vain dream of keeping Germany impotent; the present British Government could continue to blunder along as Paris wills, and still Stresemann, for all his great ability, would be helpless to resist if the country behind him were not daily strengthening its economic sinews and its will for regeneration as a leading World Power. It happens, however, that the refusal of France voluntarily to loosen any of the chains fettered upon Germany coincides with a Teutonic recovery against which many of the treaty restrictions will in time prove mere paper shackles. A decade has seen the German merchant marine, swept away by the Treaty of Versailles, again active on all the seven seas. There is no bold prophecy in the prediction that the next decade will make many of the present political restrictions equally futile.

And in the cautious, calculated, far-sighted policy which lies behind this recovery, German participation in the League of Nations plays a predominant part. The Berlin Government has learned, as was amply demonstrated by the Stresemann-Zaleski incident at Lugano, that through the machinery of the League it can effectively defend its interests and press its claims. Often in the past it has been charged that the League was in origin an association whereby the Allies could protract and stereotype the abasement of Germany. Whatever truth that charge may have contained is gone today. From the German viewpoint the League of Nations is now the lever whereby the unfair injuries of the peace treaty are to be rectified.

The protection of German minority rights in Polish Upper Silesia is only one example. Less heralded, but perhaps more important, is the changing situation with regard to the Saar Basin. Since Germany took a permanent seat on the Council of the League the French effort to Gallicize the inhabitants of this small but vital area has been abruptly terminated. The plebiscite to determine the future sovereignty of the Saar is scheduled for 1935, and the German Government is now completely confident that it will go overwhelmingly for reattachment to the Reich. So clearly does the evidence point this way that it would be no surprise if France should decide to return the Saar to Germany well before 1935, making a present virtue out of what will then be an unflattering necessity.

A somewhat similar situation has developed with regard to the mandated territories. Dr. Ludwig Kastl, formerly a high administrative officer in German Southwest Africa, is now Berlin's representative on the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League. His participation has coincided with complete disappearance of the somewhat casual manner in which the administrators of mandated territories were at first prone to regard League supervision. Germany has already given real vitality to League control of the mandates system. Is it such a long step from that to the acquisition by Germany of a mandate in her own right, whether one of her former colonies or some other undeveloped territory? The Germans themselves, in their confidential moments, do not think so.

Then there is the question of the *Anschluss*—the union of Germany and Austria. Nobody who is following the careful development of this campaign can have failed to notice the intensification of propaganda which has set in since Germany entered the League. To some extent this is due to the fact that Germany has only recently felt herself sufficiently recovered economically to assume guardianship of the territorial fragment which is now Austria. But the deeper reason is the added force which is given to the argument for Anschluss by having both of the nations concerned members in good standing of the League. As the war recedes into the background the French opposition to Austro-German

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union becomes more and more unreasonable, selfish, and difficult to indorse. Meantime that union becomes month by month more real in everything but legal sanction. And if one picks up a German copy of the Covenant of the League today it seems to open automatically to Article 19:

> The Assembly may from time to time advise the reconsideration by members of the League of treaties which have become inapplicable and the consideration of international conditions whose continuance might endanger the peace of the world.

While recent events have shown that the "Locarno spirit" is much more attenuated than was at first supposed, it remains true that Germany gained from that conference an asset which is proving of immense value in her march toward recovery of a leading position in world affairs. German membership in the League has proved, is proving, and will continue to prove of inestimable worth to Berlin's post-war diplomacy. More than that, it is steadily revolutionizing the nature of the Geneva organization. Already it is high time for a sober revision of opinion on the part of those Americans who based their opposition to the League on the belief that it partook of the nature of an anti-German alliance.

It is unquestionably true that the League of Nations today would not be nearly so useful to Germany if that country were not strong in her own right. But while economic strength permits Berlin's policy of using the League to forward recovery of world leadership, that policy is not based on actual or potential power. Infinite patience, reiterated argument, ceaseless appeal to reason, and thorough utilization of every legal foothold left for Germany on the slippery barrier of the peace treaty—such are the methods of her new diplomacy.

"Hot News" from Washington

By PAUL Y. ANDERSON

Washington, D. C., January 28

HOOVER came, he was seen, and he was partially conquered. There will be a special session of Congress, ostensibly to relieve the farmers, but actually to write bigger and more spectacular larcenies into the greatest robber tariff of history. Some Cabinet decisions have been made. Despite fresh disclosures of Tax Collector Mellon's tenderness toward Taxpayer Mellon and the latter's business associates, that benevolent old gentleman apparently is to remain for another year—long enough for him to give back to the Steel Trust, the Aluminum Trust, and similar suffering taxpayers whatever loose change remains in the Treasury. Notwithstanding his malodorous record in the Wheeler prosecution, Colonel "Bill" Donovan has been assured of a place. He is positive he will be Attorney-General, but he may be Secretary of War. Dwight Morrow is to remain in Mexico, which confirms what some had suspected from the start—that Mr. Hoover intends to be his own Secretary of State. Henry P. Fletcher probably will be allowed to wear the title and the silk hat, both of which he can do with consummate elegance. Mussolini holds seven Cabinet portfolios. Mr. Hoover is no dictator, and aside from the Presidency he seemingly will be content to discharge the duties of two—State and Commerce. Who will wear the silk hat for Commerce is doubtful—but what difference does it make?

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I REJOICE that I am not a member of the clan which makes a practice of disparaging the Senate, while making national saints and heroes out of such characters as Andrew Mellon and Calvin Coolidge. That sort of safe and easy target practice is for such wisecrackers as Will Rogers, who are more concerned with their reputations as humorists—and their earning capacity—than with the truth. Nevertheless, it would be difficult to find a more cowardly and ignominious set of proceedings than that with which the Senate confirmed the appointment of Roy O. West as Secretary of the Interior. Mr. Coolidge's boldness in putting this Insull lawyer in a place where he can grant priceless favors to the Insull companies contrasts rather favorably with the poltroonish decision of the Senate to consider the nomination in executive session and to keep the vote a secret. There would be just as much excuse, as Senator Norris remarked, for a secret debate and a secret ballot on the cruiser bill or any other important piece of legislation. The ugly fact is that secrecy was invoked by Senators who did not want their constituents to know that they had voted to confirm West.

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HAPPILY, the craven attempt was defeated through the courage and enterprise of the United Press, which promptly obtained and printed the roll call. Loud were the howls of pain and anger which rang through the cloakrooms when the Washington *News,* a Scripps-Howard paper, appeared with the list of names prominently displayed on its front page, and dire (but wholly private) were the threats of reprisal. Thus far none of them has been carried out, and I make bold to forecast that none will be. Senators may be cowards, but few of them are political fools. All of them are privy to a secret which strangely few of the Washington correspondents seem to share with them. It is that politicians are dependent on the favor of newspapermen, instead of newspapermen being dependent on the favor of politicians. There has grown up in Washington an elaborate system of artificial rules by which news is divided into "what may be printed" and "what may not be printed." Needless to say, the rules are all designed to benefit and protect the politicians who made them. The marvel is that correspondents are so soft-headed as to pay any attention to such conventions—although it must be said, in justice, that owners and editors are often to blame. A few more brave and refreshing assaults like that of the United Press, and the whole flimsy, contemptible system of taboos will crash. Then, perhaps, we may have a return to the good, old-fashioned reporter's simple tests: "Is it true? —Is it important?"

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BUT something deeper than mere convention must explain the comparative indifference of the majority of newspapers to the recent startling disclosures pertaining to Secretary Mellon's handling of tax refunds and credits. Here was the big story of the short session. It was revealed that during the eight years of Mr. Mellon's administration of the Treasury, more than three billions in taxes had been turned back—an amount larger than the cost of maintaining the United States army! Evidently the great corporations were favored. On its 1917 assessment alone, the Steel Corporation received refunds, credits, and accrued interest aggregating $57,000,000—and it has pending a claim of $50,000,000, plus accrued interest, on its taxes for 1918. The Reynolds Tobacco Company received a rebate of $6,700,000. L. H. Parker, tax expert of the Joint Congressional Committee on Taxation, analyzed this case and found that the company had been allowed to pay a rate which was less than half the rate at which its smaller competitors were assessed. He delivered the opinion that the company could not have collected a cent in a court of law. A singularly evil practice, obviously fraught with endless possibilities of corruption, is that by which employees of the Treasury are permitted to resign and subsequently appear as attorneys representing clients with claims for refunds. Under this system attorneys often are found arguing cases before boards or committees composed of their former associates, and citing precedents and cases with which they became familiar while employed in the department. Precisely such an instance was that of the Steel Corporation, which shrewdly elected, despite all its profusion of regular legal counsel, to employ Wayne Johnston, former solicitor of the Bureau of Internal Revenue, to present its claim for refunds.

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IF that, in the parlance of journalism, is not "hot news," what about this: Senator Couzens told of finding cases in the Treasury files where refunds had been allowed bearing the notation: "This is a Mellon company." He also declared there was a departmental clique which made it a business to keep the examining boards informed whenever any cases were coming up in which the Secretary was financially interested. Moreover, he declared: "The Commissioner of Internal Revenue has the power to perpetuate a political party in power indefinitely. He can arrange things so that every campaign contribution will be paid out of the public treasury, merely by returning it to the contributor in the form of a tax refund. It is a power which no man should be allowed to exercise in secret." Incidentally, the Senator gave what I believe to be the true explanation of the extraordinary immunity from criticism which Mr. Mellon has enjoyed. He pointed out what a simple matter it would be to levy an extra tax assessment of a million dollars on any metropolitan newspaper which treated the Secretary or his policies harshly. The explanation gains unusual force and plausibility by reason of the fact that this is precisely what happened to Couzens himself, except that the reprisal attempted in his case amounted to $10,000,000.

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OBVIOUSLY, the crying evil in the whole system is the utter secrecy in which all these refund and credit transactions are carried out. Congress, while asked to appropriate hundreds of millions a year to pay these refunds, is denied access to the names, the amounts, and the reasons for paying them. It was only through an exceptional set of circumstances, consummated by the daring of Representative Garner, that the facts about the Steel Corporation and Reynolds cases became public. All the rest—amounting to an average of $400,000,000 a year—is darkness. The Senate, over the vehement protests of Mr. Mellon and his spokesman Senator David Reed, has endeavored to end the secrecy by adopting an amendment to the first deficiency bill, providing for public hearings on all refunds and credits involving more than $10,000. But it must yet run the gantlet of the conference, the House, and the Presidential veto. Small hope for it.

* * * * *

AN almost equally good story is going to waste before the House Ways and Means Committee, where the clans are gathering to assist in writing the next tariff bill. There sits sympathetic Chairman Hawley while the representatives of whipped and whimpering American industry pour out their story of "ruinous foreign competition." But there, too, sits unsympathetic Representative Rainey, firing back questions designed to elicit just how far this "ruin" has proceeded. Comes the representative of the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company ("this is a Mellon company") pleading for an increase of 47 per cent in the duty on that product. It is a sad story—until Mr. Rainey's turn comes. Then it develops that the stock dividends of the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company since 1920, notwithstanding "ruinous foreign competition," have aggregated $23,000,000. Come the representatives of the Hamilton and Elgin Watch companies, threatened with a deluge of cheap Swiss and German watches, and imploring increases in the present duties of as much as 300 per cent. But merciless Mr. Rainey probes again, and it appears that since 1922 the Elgin Watch Company has earned 14 per cent on capital stock, 7 per cent on invested capital, and has distributed stock dividends aggregating $4,600,000. In the same period the Hamilton company's stock dividends have totaled $7,000,000. Who would have supposed that "ruin" could be so pleasant! Perhaps the most amusing scheme is that of the apple growers, who have the personal support of Chairman Hawley. No one claims that the great American banana industry is being ruined by the pauper bananas of Central America. So far as I know, no bananas are grown in this country. Nevertheless, it is proposed to put a tariff of 100 per cent on them. The theory is that if bananas were costlier, people would eat more apples, and that this would be a fine thing both for the American apple grower and the American stomach! Ridiculous, you say? Just the same, it will take all the influence of the United Fruit Company to stop them from putting it across. And that is just a suggestion of what is coming. A Republican National Committeeman breezed into town the other day. He is wealthy, and has many interests. Reporters sampled his excellent whiskey, and inquired if he was in Washington in connection with the tariff bill. "Listen," was the earnest reply. "You guys know I'm no saint, but some things are too raw for me, and this tariff bill is going to be one of them. Before this gang gets through, they will make old Uncle Joe Fordney look like a free trader. No, sir, I may be a politician, but I'm not a hog."

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In the Driftway

THE Drifter does not care to live in Chicago. He is not sure that he would even like to drift through. For the Drifter is a bit careless, even absent-minded, and he has the firmly lodged idea that if he accidentally bumped into anyone in Chicago, as he frequently does in New York, he might get bumped off. In his logical moments, of course, he knows that not all of the hair-raising stories he hears about Chicago are true. They are part of a legend which has grown up about this amazing city. Still, legends do not grow from nothing.

* * * * *

ALL this indicates that the Drifter has been hearing more tales of the city on Lake Michigan. These were related by a gentleman and a scholar who says they are true. The first is of a quiet evening party at which the Drifter's friend was a guest. It took place in a part of Chicago which was formerly a peaceful residential section but is now being abandoned. In the midst of a philosophical discussion, one of the guests observed a man outside the glass door. He called the attention of his host, who, instead of going to the door, excused himself and went into another room. Soon he returned and in a matter-of-fact tone said that it was all right now, that he had called the police. "Ever since a man in the next house was murdered," he explained calmly, "we take these precautions." "By the way," he went on, "did you notice the house at the corner?" "Yes," someone replied, "it's being torn down." The host smiled at his innocence. "Oh, no. Somebody threw a bomb into it a few nights ago."

* * * * *

THE second tale is of a slightly noisier evening. The residents of an exclusive section on the outskirts of Chicago became annoyed by the presence of a roadhouse in the neighborhood and sent a deputation to the sheriff to ask that it be closed. The sheriff was genial and ready to do what he could. One evening he set out in a car with a squad of assistants to raid the place. Several other cars full of newspaper reporters followed. In all of them, somehow, were liberal supplies of liquor. The evening wore on. The cavalcade not only lost its way but became quite oblivious of the straight and narrow path that cars should follow. But the sheriff did not forget that he was out to make a raid, even though he couldn't quite remember where. At last the parade stopped. The law enforcers with great zeal burst into an unoffending bungalow, routed a man and his wife out of a deep sleep, and wrecked the place, in the approved Whalen fashion. A few days later the deputation of citizens who had asked for the raid came to the sheriff to thank him for putting the roadhouse out of business. The sheriff, though he accepted the thanks and stated that he was always glad to do what he could for the citizens, was a bit mystified until he learned that the roadhouse had gone bankrupt and had closed a day before the raid.

* * * * *

OF course the Drifter is in no position—or mood—to verify these tales. But he is more convinced than ever that Chicago is no place for him. THE DRIFTER

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Our Readers and a New Third Party

Shall Liberals Be Dupes?

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: If there is no effort of liberals to form a party of their own, they will continue to be the dupes of such men as Sinclair as long as there is a Republican Party. It is Liberal Party or Greasy Republican graft forever.

Lexington, Mass., December 14 Robert Weston

Affiliation with the Socialists

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: Since the Socialists already have a firmly established party with clear-cut aims and a platform to which liberals can readily adhere, why would it not be appropriate for a liberal party to affiliate with the Socialists? It would be a fatal mistake to attempt to organize a liberal party distinct and separate from the Socialist Party, for such a movement would further divide the progressive elements in the country.

Bloomfield, Iowa, December 28 Sidney Phillips

What's in a Name?

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: To try to build up any party organization of influence under the name of Socialist is to swim vainly against the current and to battle against a handicap that cannot be overcome. Some propose the name Social Democrat. This, I think, wouldn't help at all, but simply combine two objectionable features. To call the new party frankly the Liberal Party would perhaps promote its purposes as nearly as any other name and if a really progressive social and economic platform could be offered tentatively and circulated by the press throughout the country, a mass convention might be called, and real headway be made.

Iowa City, Iowa, December 11 G. A. Kenderdine

More Power in 1932!

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: The fact that few third-party votes were cast at the 1928 election does not mean that a powerful third party will not be in the field in 1932, dedicated to the single issue of freeing government, agriculture, industry, and economic life from the tyrannical control of private monopoly. Can agricultural, industrial, and professional workers unite for national political action during the next four years? I believe that they can and that they will destroy the control of private monopoly and redistribute economic power through taxation and public ownership. Other issues can now be laid aside and the work of the 1932 campaign be begun in every section of the country. The name under which these workers may cooperate in the coming struggle to free American life from monopolistic control should be comprehensive enough to appeal to all concerned and could be for the time being the Farmer-Labor-Progressive Party—a party which would draw to its support all those who render useful service by labor and who are dependent upon labor for existence.

Los Angeles, December 20 F. L. P.

The Third Party Platform

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: The platform of a new national liberal party should include honest and efficient government; one term for the President; guaranties of freedom and constitutional rights to individuals, groups, and localities; guaranties in our foreign policy of the complete rights of other nations to govern themselves without interference in any form from us; control and development of public resources and effective governmental control of public utilities which are privately managed; intelligent prosperity to be attained by a planned program of productive public works, by tariff for revenue only, by encouragement of better methods of production and marketing, and by control of the use of Federal Reserve credits; control of wealth concentration by increased inheritance tax on large estates, by differentials between earned and unearned incomes, by attacking evasions of personal income-tax laws, by credit to cooperative organizations for production and consumption of basic commodities, and for cooperative credits and loans to wage-earners and farmers.

Albany, New York, December 27 Robert Rosenbluth

Partisanship

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: I admit that I belong to the fourteen and a half million voters who voted for Al Smith instead of for Norman Thomas. And what makes my case harder is the fact that I call myself a "Progressive" and have the highest regard for the Socialist candidate. If I may offer any excuse for my "stupid" act, it is this: I have watched the progress and regress of the Socialist Party in the United States for more than forty years, and I know its attitude toward half-Socialists or even three-quarter Socialists very well—it is an attitude of distrust, bordering on contempt. In years past it did not want any votes at all, except from those who are ready to swear fealty to the entire Socialist program.

It is true that within recent years the leaders of the Socialist Party have shown a disposition to solicit votes from non-Socialists, so as to swell their vote and thus make an impression. But just because of my knowledge of their psychology, I cannot see why one who is not ready to subscribe to all the tenets of their party should cast even one vote for their candidates.

Brooklyn, December 8 Gregory Weinstein

Socialism and the Farmer

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: Referring to the letter from Harry W. Laidler in your issue of December 12, from my experience with farmers and workers, including farm laborers and mechanics, it is hopeless to think that they can be won for the Socialist Party as long as the farmer and his hired man own automobiles. A new designation for the Socialist Party is needed, as the average American pictures a Socialist as a man who wants to divide his possessions with him—and when he has spent his share, divide again. This will no doubt sound crude, but it is a fact.

Safford, New York, December 24 William F. Buhr

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Books, Music, Plays

This Week

An Arctic Mystery Story

IN the summer of 1927 General Nobile with a party of explorers set out for the Arctic in the dirigible Italia. He left his base ship at Kings Bay, West Spitzbergen, on May 23. At 1 a. m. on May 24 he flew over the North Pole and dropped an Italian flag and a cross blessed by Pope Pius XI. Then he turned back. His wireless messages reported bad atmospheric conditions. At 10:27 a. m. on May 24 his messages ceased. No more were heard for many days. A catastrophe seemed certain. Rescue work was begun. Then, on June 2, word reached the world that a Russian peasant in the village of Voznesenskoie in the Government of Viatka, operating a small radio set, had picked up faint signals that might be from Nobile. These were actually his first calls for help. By June 9 messages had been clearly heard. The Italia had crashed on the ice off Northeast Land, an island near Spitzbergen. Seven men in the forward gondola had been carried off with the dirigible bag and Nobile knew nothing of them. Three men, Malmgren, Zappi, and Mariano, had set out on foot hoping to reach shore. Nobile and the rest of the party were remaining on the ice waiting for help.

By June 16 rescue work, largely by air, had begun on a large scale. On June 18 Roald Amundsen in the French seaplane, Latham, under Commander Guilbaud, flew from Tromsoe toward the ice-fields—and was never thereafter seen or heard from. (On September 1 fishermen off the coast of Norway came upon the float of one of the wings of the Latham.) On June 20 Lieutenant Lundborg landed on the ice near Nobile's party and brought back to Spitzbergen General Nobile and his pet dog. The next day Lundborg flew back to the ice-pack, but in landing the plane crashed and he was stranded. The pack was rapidly melting and breaking up. On July 6 a second Swedish aviator, Schiberd, risked a landing and saved Lundborg. The Swedes then announced that further rescues by plane were impossible, and the fate of the Italians seemed decided. Then the Russian ice-breaker Krassin nosed its way into the news.

This sturdy, stocky craft lumbered through the heavy ice. She broke a propeller blade and injured her rudder and the coal supply ran low, but she pushed ahead. One day Tchukhnovsky, the Russian aviator, launching his plane from the smooth ice near the Krassin, flew off through a heavy bank of fog and located Zappi and Mariano on a small piece of floating ice. He radioed the news to the ship —reporting that he saw three men—and then made a forced landing on the shore. The Krassin shoved on and rescued the Italians only a day or two before their island of ice must have broken up and gone under. Mariano was nearly unconscious; Zappi was healthy though hungry. But Finn Malmgren was not with them. Zappi reported that Malmgren had insisted that they leave him to die on the ice.

The Krassin went on her way; and just as hope was nearly abandoned by the Nobile party she steamed up to their camp on the pack and rescued all the men that were left. And then, in her matter-of-fact way, she rescued Tchukhnovsky and his crew and a relief party on skis, and with this load she made for Kings Bay.

There is the skeleton of the Italia's story, a record of amazing rescues and tragic deaths with no apparent loopholes for doubt or contradiction. But suspicious circumstances lurked behind the appearance of simple facts, and even the newspaper reports contained half-concealed charges. Now, in two books I have before me, a chasm of disagreement and uncertainty lies revealed.* Both authors, one an Italian newspaperman who accompanied the Krassin, the other a Frenchman who boarded her at Kings Bay after the rescues, recite the epic of her voyage. The first tells the story as the world knows it, and tells it with every appearance of fairness and good will. The second lards his narrative with accusations, horrifying suggestions, disconcerting facts.

Here are a few of the discrepancies in the stories—ingredients of a somber Arctic mystery play:

Giudici says that both Zappi and Mariano when rescued were suffering severely from cold and that they had gone without food for twelve days. Parijanine says that Zappi was lusty and strong, while Mariano was near death; that Zappi wore three sets of clothing (one belonging to Malmgren and one to Mariano), while Mariano was found half-naked in snowy water; that Zappi, after a doctor's examination, was found to have had food within five days, while Mariano's condition indicated nearly complete starvation.

Giudici accepts Zappi's story of Malmgren's death at its face value. Parijanine enumerates changes and contradictions and doubtful points in the story and comes as near as he dares to the charge that Zappi killed Malmgren to eat his flesh and so prolong his own life.

Parijanine states that Mariano, once on the ice and once in the ship's hospital, said these words: "When I die you can eat me, but not before." Giudici does not mention any such incident.

Giudici says that after the rescues Samoilovitch postponed further search for the men who had drifted off in the Italia's forward gondola and for Amundsen and Guilbaud, in order that he might take the men he had rescued, especially Mariano, back to the base ship and have the Krassin repaired. Parijanine says that the officers on the Krassin radioed to Nobile begging for a plane to assist in a further search for the remaining men; and that a message direct from the Italian government refused the request.

Here are only a few of the irreconcilable differences in the two reports before me. This drama of life and death in the Arctic is likely to remain an unresolved mystery. Some of the more important facts are in the hands of the Soviet Government which imposed a rule of absolute silence on every man aboard the Krassin and confiscated all the records of the trip. (Why? asks Parijanine, the skeptical.) But if Mariano is now dead, as Parijanine reports, there is no one alive today who can reveal what really happened to Finn Malmgren. Except Zappi, who has either told the truth or will never tell it.

FREDA KIRCHWEY

* "The Krassin." By Maurice Parijanine. Macaulay. $2.50.
"The Tragedy of the Italia." By Davide Giudici. D. Appleton and Company. $3.

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Life in Middletown

Middletown. By Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $5.

"MIDDLETOWN" is the pseudonym for a real community of 38,000 people somewhere in the Middle West. Financed by the Institute of Social and Religious Research, our authors lived there for over a year, studying every phase of the town's life, with the same detachment and the same objective thoroughness that a good anthropologist devotes to the habits of natives in the New Hebrides. Indeed, Dr. Clark Wissler writes the introduction to the volume.

Nothing like it has ever before been attempted; no such knowledge of how the average American community works and plays has ever been packed between the covers of one book; and I warn you that hereafter nobody has any right to make more than the most casual generalizations about the culture levels of this republic, until he has first read and mastered his "Middletown." There is much here to support Mr. Mencken, and there is no little to confound him. There is much to uphold Booth Tarkington's high opinion of his neighbors, and plenty to make us chary of that opinion. Rather than fragments, we have the whole rounded organism, described without fear, sentiment, or bias. Who touches this book touches the heart of America, nay, the heart of machine culture in the Western World—for Middletown has its great mass-production shops, and an average of a motor car to every family.

The study is divided into six main departments: Getting a living; making a home; training the young; using leisure; engaging in religious practices; engaging in community activities. Within the departments there are subdivisions, often with a chapter devoted to each. The data were gathered through interviews, questionnaires, quantitative observations and measurements, special canvasses, and careful analysis of census and other statistical material already published. By way of a bench-mark, furthermore, comparative data are shown for 1890, thus giving dramatic recital to the changes, mental as well as physical, which have taken place in the last generation. It is interesting to note, furthermore, that in gathering material through interviews, workingmen and their families were far more helpful than business men and their dependents.

Let us take the section on the use of leisure, as typical of the methods employed throughout the study. First we have an analysis of the traditional ways of spending leisure, the immemorial recreation habits. "A small river wanders through Middletown, and in 1890 when timber still stood on its banks, White River was a pleasant stream for picnics, fishing, and boating, but it has shrunk today to a creek discolored by industrial chemicals and malodorous with the city's sewage." And that's that. The great open spaces mean an automobile or nothing. But of other traditional ways of play, considerable evidence is set before us.

There is talking—in the form of lectures, sermons, gossip. Speeches, however, are getting shorter, while heckling has altogether disappeared. The popular lecture topics of the nineties—"Milton as an Educator," "The Uses of Ugliness," "We Sinais Climb and Know It Not"—give way to "The Problem of the Philippines," "Economic Fundamentals" (by economic fundamentalists), "The Future of the White Race." The workingmen still cling in their lyceums to some of the old lecture topics. The business men have given them up altogether.

There are over 40,000 books in the Middletown Public Library, fifteen times as many per capita as in 1890. The town drew out 6.5 books per person in 1924, as against .85 in 1890. The business class alone buys books in any quantity, nor is this quantity large. Only 24 out of 100 working-class housewives report expenditure for books, and these were either religious or for the children. There are 9,200 homes in the city. Into 1,840 of them comes the *American Magazine;* into 1,530, the *Saturday Evening Post;* into 900 to 1,500 go the *Delineator, Ladies' Home Journal, McCall's, Physical Culture, True Story, Woman's Home Companion.* Into 200 to 500 homes, *Collier's, College Humor, Cosmopolitan, Motion Picture Magazine, Dream World, National Geographic, Popular Science, True Romance.* Into 60 go *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair;* into 35 the *Atlantic;* 20, *Harper's* and the *Century;* 15, the *New Republic;* 4, the *Survey;* and 3, the *Dial.* (*The Nation,* alas, is not tabulated.) . . . "Middletown appears to read magazines primarily for the vicarious living in fictional form they contain." Eighty-three per cent of all books drawn from the library are fiction.

Music, like poetry and the other arts, is almost non-existent among the men of Middletown. "It has ceased to be a matter of spontaneous, active participation and has become largely a passive matter of listening to others." The singing societies of the nineties have disappeared—with one working-class exception. The Apollo Club, once attended by the bloods of the town and taught by Professor B——, who made special trips from another city, has long since collapsed. Where are the 300 schoolboys now to sing Gounod in the Opera House, as they did in 1900? "Lay awake awhile last night," says a local diary in the nineties, "listening to serenaders." Today, the penalty, if not the cause, of lying awake is the radio.

In 1892, the Art Student's League was organized. Members rented studios, employed models, went sketching along the banks of the then unpolluted river. The Art Club of today has neither brushes nor easels, but listens to lectures on "The Character of the Early Christian, Byzantine, Romanesque, and Gothic Periods."

So much for traditional ways of spending leisure—and I have only given the merest hint of the packed, luscious material which the analysis discloses. Our authors now move on to the inventions remaking leisure—specifically the automobile, the movies, the radio. Here we lose the contrast with 1890, but we gain an amazing picture of what these three machines have done to the habit patterns of the town. "The automobile," says the judge of the local Juvenile Court, "has become a house of prostitution on wheels." Finally, the authors devote a long analysis to the organization of leisure—the decline in neighborhood visiting; the increase in parties, particularly bridge and dancing parties; the 458 active clubs in the town, and what they are concerned with (including an uproarious quotation from a paper on "Bolshevism in America" read by a member at a women's study club); the antics of Rotary; the decline of the lodges; the decline of the social activities of trade unions; the increase, despite the clubs, in social loneliness.

In brief, when you finish these ninety pages you know how Middletown plays—or pathetically tries to. And when you finish the whole book, you know how Middletown lives—and how, so often failing life, it drops to the level of existence.

STUART CHASE

Understanding India

Understanding India. By Gertrude Marvin Williams. Coward-McCann. $3.50.

Living India. By Savel Zimand. Longmans, Green and Company. $3.

AMERICA'S Asiatic horizon, in the past, has included Japan, China, and the Philippines—and very little beyond. Now India has broken into the news. And there are indications that her place there will increase rather than diminish. Certainly there is no figure, East or West, quite so

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compelling—to fear or to reverence—as Mahatma Gandhi. Certainly the East of the present has no two personalities comparable to Gandhi and Tagore; and no leader among women of the versatility and distinction of Sarojini Naidu.

At the recent session of the All-India National Congress Gandhi pledged himself to initiate a new movement of non-cooperation in the event that Dominion status is not granted to India by the end of the present year. Knowing the unlikelihood of any such sweeping concession from the British raj and knowing, also, the seriousness with which Gandhi takes his promises, one has adequate ground to believe that India, in the months ahead, is likely to find an enlarging place within the horizon of American interest. It is fortunate, therefore, that two such books as these—in contrast to some others that have been written—are available to those who desire to follow developments in India with a measure of understanding.

Mrs. Williams and Mr. Zimand might, profitably, have exchanged titles. There is more of "living" India in "Understanding India" and more data, historical, political, and social, in "Living India." Mrs. Williams's book is an exciting series of adventures among the Indian people and their no less quaint British overlords. Mr. Zimand's book is not exciting. But it brings together in readable fashion a mass of shrewdly appraised information upon which a reader, desiring an introduction to India, can safely rely.

I know of no book that puts the British in India—and particularly the women—in their proper place quite so well as "Understanding India." Mrs. Williams does not make an extended analysis of the effects or portents of British rule. But she has a good deal to say, and says it pointedly, about the gross ignorance and indifference and downright hostility of the British residents toward the Indians among whom they live. The Indian services—army, trade, and civil—have been, for many a generation, a haven of refuge where second-rate young Britishers could live as only first-rate Britishers—and relatively few of them—could live at home. The superficialities of British society in India are probably unmatched anywhere. Those superficialities have given rise to many of the irritations out of which the irreconcilable attitude of India's Nationalists has grown.

In fact, Mrs. Williams's own experiences in traveling through India give the lie to many of the opinions about the Indians that are popularly held in British circles. If Mrs. Williams errs in her estimate of the Indian people, it is on the side of sympathy. Perhaps it is just as well, in the interests of a balanced viewpoint, that someone has erred that way. But "Understanding India" passes over many of the evils of Indian life with a somewhat too casual reference and a tendency to obscure them by making comparisons with the paganisms of the West. Such a process is no more a help to the understanding of India than the other method of picturing the land exclusively in terms of its evils. Admitted the paganisms of the West, it still remains true that human life in India is lived out on a lower level than in any other country of the world. To side-step that fact is to evade the most serious series of problems that confronts the land.

On one point, among others, both Mrs. Williams and Mr. Zimand agree. Hinduism, in both books, is made responsible for the major social abuses that exist among the people and for their backward condition. And Mrs. Williams adds to her accusation against Hinduism the statement that "the vaunted spirituality of the Hindu is probably his chief handicap." In that opinion, I believe, most unbiased observers—Indian and non-Indian—will agree.

Few books that seek to enlighten as well as to entertain and that discuss matters so highly controversial have the charm of "Understanding India." And for the necessary supplemental material of facts and figures and weighed conclusions there is, at hand, Mr. Zimand's "Living India." It has been said that Mr. Zimand might have prepared his book in a good library. I do not agree. His statistical data, doubtless, a first-rate library would contain—which makes Mr. Zimand's use of them all the more commendable. But the pattern that he weaves and the conclusions that he draws are not library-made. His analysis of the caste system, for example, is encyclopedic only in its accuracy. He interprets the system as one who has walked, with understanding, across its barriers. And he offers no apologies for the uncompromising manner in which he condemns it.

In fact, Mr. Zimand, perhaps because he looked more deeply into the documents, is not so ready as Mrs. Williams to throw a sheen of glamor over the obvious inadequacies of Indian civilization. He covers the whole category from sacred cows to child marriage. And he admits that for these problems which are inherently Indian, the Indian people themselves must find a solution.

STANLEY HIGH

The Past and Future of Poetry

Lyrical Poetry of the Nineteenth Century. By H. J. C. Grierson. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $1.25.

Phases of English Poetry. By Herbert Read. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $1.25.

EACH of these books is admirable in its way, but Mr. Read's way is more nearly consonant with the expressed purposes of the Hogarth lectures than Professor Grierson's. Grierson, after generalizing a little on the nature of the lyric, proceeds to a series of eminently intelligent comments on almost all poets of any importance from Blake to Hardy. Few critics could compress such illuminating and well-founded judgments into so few pages, or could discuss such diverse lyricists with a wisdom so calm and sympathetic. His erudition is vast but unpretentious, and the tone of the entire book suggests the loving familiarity with which one ought to regard living literature rather than the diligent research methods of the professional student of literary antiquities.

One will look in vain, however, in Professor Grierson's book for any fresh insight into the nature of lyric poetry or any revealing interpretation of the successes and failures of the nineteenth century. This is disappointing, not only because the other volumes in the series have been analyses rather than mere commentaries, but also because the brevity of the books lends itself to fortified generalization more easily than to systematic discussion. Mr. Read's "Phases of English Poetry," for example, is concerned with the whole expanse of English verse, but, thanks to his method, it gives the impression neither of hurry nor of regretful omission.

Mr. Read's "phases," it should be noted at once, are not chosen at random; they include what he regards as the four main divisions of poetry. He begins with the ballad, produced for, if not by—he refuses to take sides in the perennial controversy—the community as a whole. Humanistic poetry, with special attention to Spenser, next occupies him; then religious poetry, with Crashaw receiving detailed treatment; and finally the poetry of nature, notably as found in Wordsworth. A chapter on pure poetry, with a clear account of the French controversy on the subject, gives him opportunity for definition; and his closing chapter, on modern movements, states his thesis.

The thesis is this: The ballad poet is identified with his world, the humanist poet is at the center of his world, the religious poet is at the periphery of his world, and the romantic poet is his own world, standing outside the world that we normally recognize; each of these positions is seemingly impossible for the modern poet, and hence the sterility of our era; if, how-

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ever, any of the positions is to be regained, it is the first, the position of the ballad poet who sacrificed individuality to the needs of the populace. Mr. Read shrinks from his own conclusion, but he insists that it is necessary for the poet to "give himself wholly to 'the cadence of consenting feet.'"

This, as Mr. Read admits, is difficult doctrine for what is generally considered a stiff-necked generation. And one questions both the possibility and the necessity of the course he maps out. There is, certainly, something to be said for his program. If literature requires an organized society to give it substance, and if our democratic experiment is to be consistently pursued, a popular poetry may offer the only way out of the contemporary morass. On the other hand, the more significant poets of the day—one thinks of such diverse figures as T. S. Eliot and Robert Frost—are achieving such success as they have by building, largely through a process of exclusion and rejection, a kind of humantistic world to which they may respond much as Spenser responded to the world of the Renaissance. This process, ill-defined as yet, may go on, aided perhaps by new developments in philosophy, until we have a culture, related to but not identical with the culture of the masses, which is capable of supporting a humanistic poetry. After all, there is nothing in Mr. Read's cycle which makes inevitable its repetition from start to finish.

GRANVILLE HICKS

A Writer in Prison

Grimhaven. By Robert Joyce Tasker. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.

NO boredom on earth can be so terrible as that suffered by an alert intellect confined to the routine of a modern penitentiary. It is when the mind is sick with blankness and turns in upon itself that the urge to self-expression arises if the facility for it exists; and this is what happened to Robert Joyce Tasker. By chance he found among his fellow-prisoners a very few who could feel and work with him—principally Ernest Booth, whose own book, "Stealing Through Life," will be printed this spring. These men were circumscribed and truncated in a way which is incredible to any one not familiar with prison routine; only the hardiest talent could outlive the strait-jacket put upon it in such a place. Tasker's after fading and almost dying more than once, has outlived it.

"Grimhaven" is not so much the description of a given environment as it is a mental autobiography. In a work so deeply personal, the actual material background becomes incidental; nevertheless, it is richly and startlingly portrayed. He has made visible the strange secret world of San Quentin—from the chaotic, confused impressions which he himself received at first to the painful, detailed description of his immediate surroundings with which the book ends. Incorporated in the book is a chapter on the dungeons, written by Jo Mackin, whom Tasker calls "Jockey." That cruel matter-of-fact narrative reveals yet another addition to the remarkable group of writer-convicts whom San Quentin chances at present to hold behind its gray walls.

A recent ruling of the State Prison Board of California forbids these writers from marketing their work. Nothing more, therefore, can be heard from Tasker until the day when the State hands him a prison-made suit and $5 and bids him reenter the world of so-called freedom. But "Grimhaven" is evidence that something worth while to our civilization is growing, like an accidental fruit-tree, in those cement-covered swamps to which we send our misfit and unfit fellow-beings. For Robert Joyce Tasker is not a prisoner who happens to be able to write. He is a writer who happens to be in prison.

MIRIAM ALLEN DE FORD

Books in Brief

Foundations of English Opera. A Study of Musical Drama in England during the Seventeenth Century. By Edward J. Dent. Cambridge University Press and The Macmillan Company. $5.

The author discusses manifestations of the operatic principle which governs, or should govern, the combination of music and drama. Genuine achievement—the Elizabethan chorister-dramas, the Jacobean masques, "and those rare specimens of genuine English opera, 'Venus and Adonis' and 'Dido and Aeneas'"—he assigns only to the amateurs, by whom he means the adventurous; for "to us who have been brought up on Wagner and Verdi, it is extraordinarily difficult to realize the adventurousness of those early composers who interpreted a complete drama in terms of music. For their achievement, little though they themselves may have been aware of it, signified an attempt, at least, toward a complete inversion of the expressive values of music and poetry. . . . No principle could be more misleading than to make the music subservient to the drama. The music is itself the drama: that is the fundamental principle of opera. A composer of opera must choose a dramatic idea which will lend itself to musical principles of development; the poet must cast his thoughts in forms which definitely require music for their complete expression." The trouble is "that in any language the words of an opera, even the words of a simple song, are bound to be disruptive, antilogical, anarchistic in regard to the ordered intelligence of the music." And English opera is most difficult to achieve because its words are in this respect most difficult to set to music. This brings us to Purcell, with whom Professor Dent ends his study:

> When we consider his marvelous power of setting English words to music, the massive nobility or the racy humor of his declamation, his unerring perception of a stage picture, his unrivaled fertility of invention, and his unsurpassed handling of all technical resources, it is difficult not to believe that he only wanted an equally skilful librettist and the reasonable support of an intelligent public to have become the greatest operatic composer of his time in Europe.

Selected Poems. By Carl Spitteler. Translated by Ethel Colburn Mayme and James F. Muirhead. The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

In his lyrical work Spitteler was a minor Heine; in his epics, one of which won the Nobel Prize, he blew faintly on the dying embers of classical romances; in the original German he is barely worth reading as a pleasant curiosity. But in English there is the mournful fact that though Mr. Muirhead has rendered him ably and truly, Miss Mayme, who has done most of the translating, mangles him beyond recognition.

Lions and Lambs. By Low with interpretations by "Lynx." Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.75.

This collection of cartoons by one of England's leading caricaturists offers amusing and highly irreverent portraits of the political and literary notabilities of Great Britain. Bernard Shaw with fluffy whiskers and what looks suspiciously like a red nose, the Lord Chief Justice of England looking dreadfully porcine, Hilaire Belloc resembling a navvy, Mr. Wells resembling a grocer, and David Lloyd George, the picture of the brightest, most lovable, and most irresponsible of bad boys, are some of the high spots. "Lynx's" comment on the subjects of the drawings is often trenchant. It occasionally rises to admirable epigram, as in the sentence about Mr. Lloyd George: "Because of his smallness he will not let us have confidence in him; and because of his greatness he will not let us have confidence in ourselves."

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Music in London—I

AFTER sampling its musical wares I was hardly prepared for the complaint that England is not a musical nation. It turns out that those who complain are only the dealers in musical instruments, printed music, and piano lessons, who suffer from the fact that the musical public is very small. And what troubles them is a blessing—disguised perhaps, but a blessing nevertheless—for the musical public. Disguised, since it is a disadvantage not to have a permanent orchestra and opera; but a blessing, since what is lost in perfection of orchestral performance is negligible compared with what is gained by having a small but intelligent audience. What is gained is programs and other conditions far superior to those of New York. This is true not only of orchestral concerts, which I shall discuss next week, but of recitals by individuals and small groups.

The traveling virtuosos give the stereotyped programs in London that they give in New York; Levitzki sickens one by repeating what he has been repeating how many times a week for how many years, and even Myra Hess, in her only recital of the season, charms her way along beaten paths. There is an audience for that sort of thing in London, as there is everywhere. But other concerts reflect the spirit of the genuine amateur of music, which impels many in the audience to make music together in their homes. Katherine Goodson gives not only the usual piano recital but, with assistance, a concert of chamber music employing the piano. Professor Tovey, after his own unusual recital, obtains the assistance of Adela Fachiri for a recital of sonatas of Bach, Beethoven, and John Ireland. Mme Fachiri, for the end of her own recital, engages assisting artists for a Schubert quintet; and with her sister, Jelly d'Aranyi, she plays music by Bach, Vivaldi, and other composers for two violins. Most notable are three Bach concerts given by Harold Samuel, pianist; Isolde Menges, violinist; Dorothy Silk, soprano; Joseph Slater, flutist, and a small string ensemble. The works given include two Brandenburg concertos and the B minor suite, almost incredibly effective from the small orchestra; sonatas for piano and flute and piano and violin; an Italian cantata and other vocal numbers; and concertos for two pianos, with the assistance of Myra Hess.

There is, then, a large amount of Bach, and a large amount of chamber music outside of the contributions of permanent chamber ensembles. These feel called upon to justify their existence somewhat as the International String Quartet does, by giving, in its five concerts, all ten quartets of Mozart and modern works of Brahms, Debussy, Ravel, Vaughan Williams, and Goossens; while to balance the conventional programs of the London String Quartet there are any number of interesting programs by mushroom organizations. One's eyes open wide at advertisements by a fashionable hotel of Sunday afternoon tea concerts at which only quartets by Brahms, Beethoven, Mozart, and the rest are to be played. But a popular-priced Sunday afternoon orchestral concert organized by the Sunday League includes a Bach Brandenburg concerto and Beethoven's unfamiliar second piano concerto. And, while the audience is no doubt a mixed one, nevertheless there is significance in the fact that the shrewd organizer of a Sunday afternoon series in huge Albert Hall assigns two of the dates to the great chamber ensemble Cortot-Thibaud-Casals.

In most cases the performances are equal to the music performed. Of the artists I have heard for the first time, Miss Silk and Miss Menges impress me most; Miss d'Aranyi's playing is somewhat reduced in scale, but she is a fine musician, which her sister is not; the International String Quartet does not play consistently well or badly, or consistently in tune or out.

B. H. HAGGIN

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Drama

Maxwell Anderson Goes Wrong

MAXWELL ANDERSON is certainly one of the three or four most interesting of our American dramatists, but there is something seriously wrong with his new piece, "Gypsy," at the Klaw Theater. Though he showed in "Saturday's Children" how convincingly he could draw contemporary characters and how persuasively he could make them speak with the living accent of the moment, he now fails dismally just where he succeeded before. "Gypsy" can be nothing unless it is a transcript from contemporary life and yet it becomes, as it proceeds, more and more completely enveloped in an air of persistent unreality.

The temptation is to assume that this unfortunate fact is due to some failure in technique and to try to put one's finger upon the point where the author went astray, but I am inclined to suspect that the real trouble lies with the subject itself and that Mr. Anderson handled it badly for the simple reason that there is no possible way of handling it well. He has taken as his central character a charming young girl unfortunately endowed with what Chaucer called "a sliding heart." He has shown how she makes love to every eligible young man who comes her way, and so far it is all convincing enough, for no one doubts that such characters exist. There are now and there always have been attractive women who not only yielded themselves to almost any importunity but who broke faith without malice because there was simply no constancy in them—women who became what is vulgarly called "easy," less because tempestuous passions or deep corruption overbore their scruples than because they lack that initial reluctance to accept sexual contacts which in most people must be overcome by some strong emotion. But when Mr. Anderson attempts to make her visit poetic justice upon herself, when he asks us to believe that she, being what she is, would nevertheless be overtaken with such a violent self-loathing that she would turn on the gas for no reason except that she did not like her own character, he is asking us to accept a psychology which belongs obviously to the realm of cheaply moral fiction rather than to that of life.

A woman of loose life but conventional impulses might easily do such a thing, for the Nemesis of a bad conscience is always upon the trail of those who violate their own code. Gypsy herself might have done it if her inconstancy had lost her the one man she really desired, for in that case her despair would have grown out of a loss she could understand. But the fact that she gave herself to men for the simple reason that she did not see why she shouldn't is a carefully established premise of her character, and to imagine, as Mr. Anderson does, that she would be driven to the brink of suicide by reading a poem which begins,

> Your love is like a quicksand where men build,
> Day after day, bright palaces of years,

is to do more than to overestimate the possible effect of verses not in themselves especially searing, for it is to assume that she could feel something which, by the very premise aforesaid, she could not possibly feel.

Doubtless any one of her betrayed lovers might in a moment of anger wish that some such poetically just fate would overtake her. Indeed it is just exactly the sort which would furnish the plot of a jilted suitor's revengeful day-dream, and it is this which I meant when I said that the psychology belonged to the realm of cheaply moral fiction, since fiction of this sort generally follows the pattern of the day-dream appropriate to the persons for whom it is designed—telling nursemaids that the wicked nobleman will regret his wasted life when he happens to come into contact with virtue such as theirs and telling inexpert swains that the proud beauty will eat her heart out when she learns that her fickleness has made her forever unworthy of his pure love. But Mr. Anderson is capable of something a good deal better than nursemaid literature in spite of the unfortunate conception which he has somehow got a hold of.

The character and the fate of the heroine are obviously the subject of the play. To change either would be to change the theme completely, but no change less fundamental could make it seem true or significant and it is the falsity of the central conception which has led the author into an inevitable falsity of dialogue and situation in his efforts to develop it. Gypsy, as her creator portrays her, is all too fatally like that ever-memorable heroine of "The Green Hat" who, it will be recalled, never seems able to take a new lover without first dropping a tear over the grave of Chastity. Claiborne Foster is attractive in the title role.

James Forbes's "Precious" (Royal Theater) adopts frankly farcical methods to tell the story of a wealthy bachelor who marries a dumb young thing. It is amusing and particularly well played. So, too, is "Merry Andrew" (Henry Miller's Theater) in which the author concerns himself with a village druggist who retires from business and becomes straightway a nuisance to himself and family. The play is pleasantly obvious in the rather old-fashioned way which suggests the days when Wynchell Smith and John Golden knew best what the public wants.

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The End of Kuzbas

By RUTH KENNELL

I REMEMBER how the Wobblies used to sing in the old colony days in Siberia,

Kuzbas will never die—
'Twill simply fade away!

And it is generally believed that this is how it came to an end. But the fact is that a series of dramatic events, little known outside of Russia, brought to a precipitous close the American control of the mining enterprise known as "Kuzbas" in Kuznetsky Basin, Siberia.

Unfriendly critics of social experiments point to Kuzbas as an awful example of the failure of "Utopias," as they rather contemptuously term colonies with unique social ideas. However, Kuzbas was never intended by the Soviet Government to be other than a Soviet state enterprise, run on American lines and consequently needing a number of qualified American workers. Incidentally it preferred that these Americans be in sympathy with the Soviet power, and so slight were the material remunerations that this was automatically assured.

It was due to a misunderstanding of this official Soviet idea, fostered by the New York Organization Committee, that much of the trouble ensued, notably the conflict between the I. W. W. 's on the one hand, who expected to try out their dreams of industrial democracy, and the American Communists on the other, who supported unequivocally the Soviet system. But as early as June, 1922, S. J. Rutgers, the director, issued a statement in the Kuzbas bulletin which set forth clearly just what the project was: an attempt on the part of the Soviet Government to enlist the aid of qualified American workers in the building up of shattered Russian industries, specifically steel plants in the Urals (soon abandoned) and mines in Kuznetsky Basin.

All through the long and bitter conflicts over social organization and management, Rutgers never lost sight of the ultimate purpose of the American group in Siberia, which was not to establish a permanent isolated community trying out its pet social schemes; it was to enlist individual Americans under a two-year contract to work alongside several thousand Russians in a Soviet state mining enterprise, trying, if possible, to maintain control in order better to establish American methods. The Kuzbas program, like the whole Soviet program, was inclined to sacrifice individuals to its big, abstract social ideals.

By the end of 1924 the Kuzbas Colony, after many tribulations, was actually running on this basis and was industrially successful. In spite of the departure of many disgruntled and disillusioned members, a large number stayed on even after their two-year contracts had been completed. Recruiting in America had stopped not because it was impossible to persuade any more Americans to come over, but simply because the management did not want any more. Rutgers and STO (Soviet of Labor and Defense) never agreed with the wild plans of the American Organization Committee to send over thousands of "pioneers"; the offici program kept the maximum number of foreigners in th enterprise at 10 per cent and did not even anticipate perma nency in American control.

In 1925 the enterprise, under American managemer and with almost two hundred qualified foreign workers i positions of responsibility, had achieved such noteworthy suc cess that the Supreme Economic Council (Vay-Es-En-Ha put under its control additional mines in Kuznetsky Basir including Kolchugina and a steel plant at Guriev. By thi decision, their hostile competitor, Kuzbas Trust, wa liquidated.

When I made my final departure from Kuzbas in th fall of 1925 the American colony was at the height of it success and power. The American technicians and heads o departments were personages in the community. Even th housing, that sorest trial in the colony's history, had greatl improved. A few American engineers were sent to Kol chugina and Guriev to make surveys and assume control more specialists were sought in the United States, not in th haphazard, grandiose fashion of the early days, but definitel qualified men for specific jobs. Of course, I shall not her go into sordid details of inevitable bureaucracy, learned too readily from the horde of Russian office-workers and tech nicians, or the inefficiency, and the continued, if decreased dissatisfaction on the part of individual colonists.

But at the end of 1925 something occurred which cas a shadow on the American colony, like a forecast of doom This was the death of Bronca Kornblith, the frail but pas sionately devoted and energetic secretary of Rutgers. He continued his work, but the spirit seemed to have gone out o him. By the spring of 1926, because of failing health Rut gers was unable longer to carry on his heavy duties and searched for an assistant with whom he could temporarily intrust the work.

I do not know who advised the director to take the next fatal step. But Rutgers's outstanding weakness was his inability to judge character—he had always depended upon Bronca's almost uncanny instincts to do this for him. But poor, impetuous Bronca was gone; over her grave in a Southern province Rutgers had placed a stone on which was written: "Here lies a heart of gold and a will of iron." The director chose for his assistant a Russian mining engineer up to that time employed in Donetz Basin, a Communist by the name of Korobkin. So implicitly did Rutgers trust this man that he was not even suspicious when Korobkin requested that he be permitted to bring forty of his own qualified workers to Kemerovo with him. He explained that it was impossible for him to work efficiently with only new men. When the contracts were drawn up for the forty "spetzie," most of whom were "non-Party," their chief argued that since they were all highly qualified men, and accustomed, moreover, to the milder climate of the South, they could not be expected to go to Siberia (still regarded as a place of exile) except on generous salaries; for instance, in the case of the future chief engineer, 20,000 rubles a year—or twice as much as the American chief engineer received and about twenty times as much as was paid most of the American specialists. Rutgers, anxious to get away to a sanitarium in

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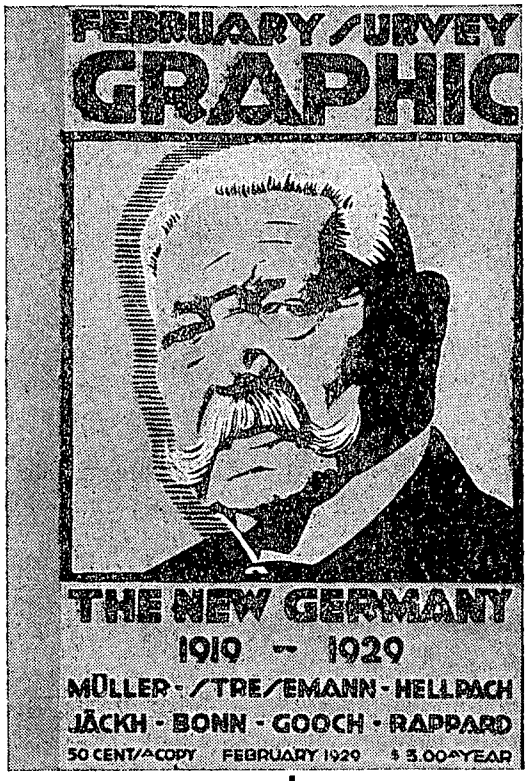
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Holland, agreed to these conditions and left the imposing new assistant director in full control.

Such was the new Russian management. In the actual routine in shops, mines, and chemical plant (as is always the case and which proves the relative unimportance of the administration) the work went on much as usual. It was not so easy to throw out American machinery, untrain Russian workmen, or change production methods. In order to prove that his was more capable than the American management, Korobkin sped up production. However, his enormous overhead soon brought up the price of coal. But the local trade union and the Communist Party, being only human, seemed to welcome a return to the old familiar ways. Russians as a rule are very nationalistic and resent the competition of foreign workers. And so it went on. When Rutgers returned late in the fall, he found that many of the best American workers had resigned and that, in fact, he himself had been done out of a job. He resigned in December.

Apparently, the ambition of Korobkin was to be rid entirely of the Americans by January, 1927. To facilitate the work he sent one of his forty men to Moscow to reorganize the Kuzbas office there. Comrade Gaft was the commercial director of the enterprise (having supplanted a very capable American) and Korobkin's right-hand man. He was well fitted for the role: a slightly obese Georgian with a dark, heavy face, he hid his grossness and stupidity under an arrogant and pompous manner. He took charge of the Moscow office which for so many years had been presided over by the lovable and devoted manager, Boris Foote. Foote stepped out smiling. He had known what was coming. He and other colonists had appealed in vain to Vay-Es-En-Ha in Moscow, but the Supreme Economic Council was tired of Kuzbas, which had caused them endless trouble —besides, Korobkin's reports seemed satisfactory enough.

Gaft cold-bloodedly proceeded first to give Foote notice to vacate his rooms in the same building, which Gaft wanted for his own family, and then to discharge all the old office force one after another, with the exception of party members, whom he could not touch. But in the end the villain of our melodrama suffered just defeat. A colony member of long standing, severing her connection with Kuzbas, presented a claim signed by Rutgers for a certain sum of money due her from the enterprise. Gaft refused to pay the money, maintaining that Rutgers was no longer director when he signed the order; he treated the American woman so outrageously that, being a party member and knowing that Gaft claimed to be one, she quietly went to the Central Control Commission of the Russian Communist Party (the highest political body in Soviet Russia) and complained.

Gaft was summoned at once. He went unsuspectingly to the great gray stone building on Elinka within the old Chinese Wall, a place where, like Downing Street, the destinies of a mighty nation are often determined. He probably thought it meant a promotion! Completely unstrung by the unexpected attack, he nevertheless denied the charges, claiming that he had been perfectly willing to pay the sum stated in the order, but that his accuser had tried to extort more money, threatening him with blackmail if he refused. "Her charges are a lie," he roared, "she's an adventuress!" He behaved so boorishly before the presidium of the Control Commission—men and women who were the flower of the old Bolshevik ranks—that they were unanimous in their condemnation of him. For the second and undoubtedly la time in his career, Gaft was expelled from the party. H had been a candidate on probation.

But since this political organization did not have th authority to remove the commercial director from his pos it turned the case over to the G. P. U. for an investigatio which soon resulted in the arrest of Gaft on a secret charg

He did not have a shred of defense, not a witness in h behalf. At the eleventh hour, his attorney made charges tha it was an American conspiracy against the new Russian mar agement, but the witnesses called showed that they had n reason to be biased in favor of the Americans, and the ne office manager was compelled to admit the veracity of th letter. Gaft was sentenced by the court, consisting of judge and two elected jurors, one a woman factory worke and the other a man teacher, to five years in prison.

Meanwhile, the Central Control Commission of th party, demanding to know who was responsible for the ap pointment to a high post of a man of low character, almos illiterate, and pretending to be an engineer, summoned Com rade Korobkin to Moscow.

The investigation was long. It dragged on throug 1927 and finally in January, 1928, the trial of Korobkin an his Forty Robbers took place in Scheglovsk, near Kemerov Mines. The defendants were charged with mismanagemen of a state industry, misappropriation of funds, extravagance favoritism, and a number of other serious Soviet crime Gaft was brought out of a Siberian prison to answer the ad ditional charges. To his five-year sentence were added fiv more years. Eight others, including Korobkin, were give from five to ten years in prison.

If this story were like the usual melodrama, it woul have a happy ending and we should find the Americans re instated in Kemerovo and the Kuzbas Colony triumphant But things do not always work out so justly. By this tim most of the Americans were gone, with the exception of few colonists who had married Siberian women and settle down. So a Russian director was appointed, an engineer b the name of Kotin, who proved to be reliable. The enter prise now goes along like any other Russian industry.

But I was more saddened than amused to read i *Izvestia* (the official newspaper of the government) of No vember 11, 1927, a long, illustrated article entitled: Th Industrial Heart of Siberia; a Report on Kuzbas. I read t the end and found not a single word about the Americans The writer evidently had no suspicion that an America had ever been about. Why? Why didn't the director an engineers whom the visiting correspondent interviewed men tion the former American management, which had been s much responsible for the notable improvements? Wh knows? Yet how churlish it seems, and how pathetic, too when one thinks of all the idealism and labor which th colonists from America poured into that project.

Of course, it really does not matter. The article alon proves what the American colony achieved in Siberia. It enduring work lives on. Due largely to the tremendou impetus which the presence of the foreign group in Kemerov gave, Kuzbas stands today, in the words of the reporter, as "model community" and "the industrial heart of Siberia.' Taken as a colonization scheme or a social experiment, Kuz bas was a failure. But as an industrial undertaking it suc ceeded and its work lives on.

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